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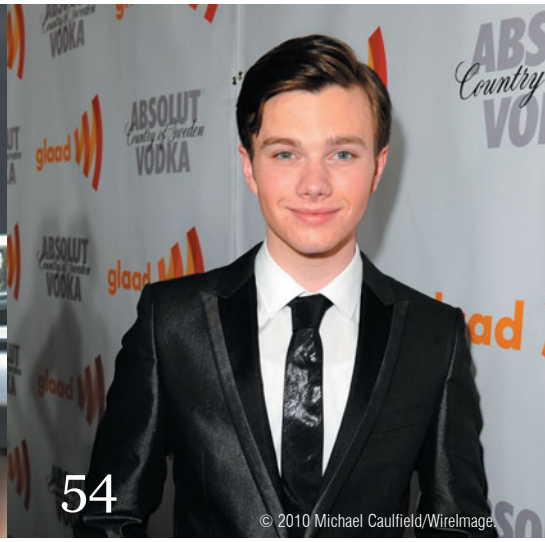

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~ BRETT TAYLOR

Social Media - the cat's meow

Facebook, *MySpace* and *Twitter* are just some of the social networking websites most of us visit these days. Somehow, a vast majority of you find time to check and update these sites on a daily/hourly basis. Alas, I am not that dedicated.

The world has indeed become a smaller place as it gets easier for us to communicate and connect with people from across the globe. The convenience of checking up on what your friends are doing with the click of a button, has in some cases, replaced a simple phone call. Names have been replaced with handles or avatars and it all has become very impersonal. This leads me to ask, *have social networking websites driven us further away from each other instead of bringing us closer*?

Facebook. The scary reality is that if you don't have a *Facebook* or *MySpace* account you almost do not exist—and if you don't tweet or know what *Twitter* is you have probably been living in a cave. Cyberspace is no longer a mere tool to do research, get information, sell or buy products and communicate—it has evolved into an alternative means of socialization. We share information about ourselves with hundreds, if not thousands, of people every day, and in return, we get to know more about others. Sometimes we learn things about people that we rather could have done without.

There are very few people I know that are not on *Facebook*. And, although I think I have only a couple of hundred friends on *Facebook*, my home page gets flooded with status updates every few minutes. Some updates are quite interesting while others are just plain bizarre. One person on *Facebook* (one of those friends-via a friend-via a friend), insists on providing *blow-by-blow* accounts about the status of his erections—*like I need to know this!* Seriously—is his life *that* uninteresting or should there be some cause for concern regarding his obsession with his penis? Another person seems to have serious relationship problems as her relationships status fluctuates between being single, in a relationship, engaged, and back to single again in the course of just one week. Either she's experiencing some schizoid episodes or she urgently needs to evaluate her "relationship" as it does not seem healthy.

Something I find particularly bizarre are the *Facebook* profiles people create for their pets and children. A family member (*whose name I dare not mention*) has created and maintains profiles for her dog and cat; complete with photos, careers and relationship status. Another person I know has done the same for her 9-month-old son, and he already has 70 plus friends. It's just creepy.

Even stranger is the fact that on *Twitter* I have a friend who has been following a cat. No, you didn't read incorrectly, she really is following a critter of the feline family. Apparently she gets almost hourly updates from the feline lounging around the house, taking a nap, or using the litter box. Now, she admits this is her own craziness for following the daily toils of a fictional cat, but curiosity also got the better of over one-and-a-half-million other people who are also following "*Sockington*" the famous tweeting feline.

Social networking sites have also made us lazy. *Where are the days when friends returned from an exotic holiday and we would pop by for a visit to check out their holiday photos?* These days, you can follow their adventures online and look at their holiday photos on *Facebook*—no need to get into your car to physically see them. Even birthday greetings have become impersonal. You post your personalized message on their profiles and can even give them virtual gifts. Personally, I miss the birthday calls I used to receive from my family and friends, and receiving a real life birthday card in the mail.

How many of us really know the people we are friends with online? Very few of us have actually met even half of our virtual friends. Yet, on a daily basis, I have an unadulterated bird's eye view of the turmoil's and joys of all of their lives if I want it; and they have the same of mine if I actually updated more often. *Quite frightening if you sit back and think about it.* Effectively, we are sharing vast amounts of personal information about ourselves with perfect strangers, and yes, even with "*cats*".

To a certain degree technology has made it easier for us to communicate. Whether you use *Facebook*, *Twitter*, *MySpace*, *MSN*, *Skype* or any of the other platforms to stay in touch, the one thing you really should be asking is, are these mediums a better substitute for personal contact? Social networking websites have changed the way we connect with people. Even though you can reach a friend or family member living on a different continent—with just the click of a mouse—there is still a barrier between you; and the Internet will never be able to replace face-to-face personal contact or the genuine warmth of a real hug.

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Ricky Martin Comes Out

Ricky Martin has finally announced that he is gay. Martin posted on his website in March that he is "a fortunate homosexual man" and is "blessed to be who I am." Part of his decision to come out had to do with his twin sons, Martin said, and his desire to live honestly and authentically for them, as well as for himself. The 38-year-old singer had previously remained mute on his sexuality, despite years of speculation.

While the news that Ricky Martin is gay may not come as a great shock to many of us, we must not underestimate the effect that his disclosure may have on his professional life. The Puerto Rican performer has legions of fans throughout Latin America, many of whom are Catholics with deep-seated traditional religious (anti-gay) values. It is to be hoped that the La Vida Loca singer will continue to enjoy a strong career.

Religious Extremists Close Down Gay Conference in Indonesia

On the very first day of the International Lesbian and Gay Association (ILGA) being held at a hotel in the city of Surabay, Indonesia, police raided the event and dispersed all the participants. Conference attendees were made to leave the hotel, and groups later searched the hotel rooms to make sure everyone connected with ILGA had gone. Witnesses said that the police and hotel personnel were acting under the direction of a mob of Islamist extremists.

Indian Gay Couple Forced to Divorce

When Sandip Soibam and Nikhil Sharma exchanged rings in Manipur in March, Sharma declared it was the happiest day of his life. This happiness was short-lived, however, as the families of both men have put such pressure on them, even having them summoned by the police, that the couple has decided to divorce. According to officials, the wedding was not legal since vows were not exchanged and it did not follow the Hindu wedding ceremony or other similar ritual. Same-sex marriage became decriminalized in India last year; but this was the first public gay wedding. The two men had been together for six years.

Hungarian Court Upholds Constitutionality of Registered Partnerships

On July 1 of last year, the Registered Partnership Act came into effect in Hungary, giving same-sex couples most of the same legal rights as heterosexual couples. The act was immediately challenged by nine different groups—many of them religious—claiming that the act was unconstitutional and undermined traditional marriage. The Hungarian Constitutional Court has rejected all the challenges and has affirmed that the act is in accordance with the constitution's principle of human dignity, and stated that the law will promote the acceptance of gays and lesbians in Hungarian society.

Costa Rican President Advocates for Same-Sex Marriage?

In what some consider a case of too little, too late, Costa Rican President Oscar Arias made public statements calling on his nation to adopt legal measures to protect LGBT citizens and embrace the idea of same-sex marriage. Unfortunately, the statements were made during his last week as president. President Laura Chinchilla, took office on May 8 and, while she supports civil rights for gays and lesbians, she does not favour giving them the right to marry.

Prom Night In Georgia

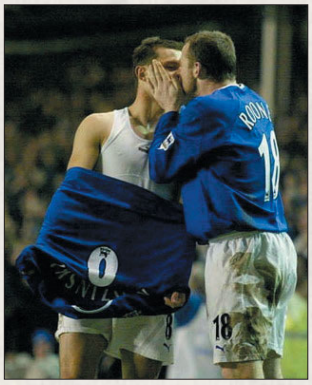
High school can be tough, especially if you are a gay teenager who wants to bring his boyfriend to the prom. Derrick Martin, an 18-year-old honours student, asked the principal at his high school if he could bring his boyfriend as his date to the prom. Initially, the response was, no—but in March, the school stated that there was no policy against it—so permission was granted. The story has caused quite a stir in Martin's hometown. Such a stir, in fact, that his parents have kicked him out of the house because of all the media attention. On the plus side, Martin was made an honourary member of the Atlanta Gay Men's Chorus during a public concert and had many messages of support via the Internet and Facebook.

Jamaica Holds First PRIDE March

In a country known for homophobic, anti-gay violence, it is remarkable that Jamaica's first PRIDE march—officially called the Walk for Tolerance—took place peacefully and without incident in early April. Mob violence has often marred any public display of support for queer rights in the Caribbean country. About 100 people took part in the walk, ending on the beach at Montego Bay. The event was organized by Jamaica AIDS Support for Life (JASL).

Rotten Tomatoes for Turkey

The Turkish state minister for families and children Selma Aliye Kavaf, angered gay rights activists in Turkey when she made public statements during an interview that homosexuality was a biological disorder, a disease that needs to be treated. Protesters in Istanbul, demanded an apology from Kavaf and threw rotten tomatoes at an effigy of her, while some shouted for her resignation. Lambda Istanbul has nominated Kavaf for its Homophobia Award.



Australian Footballers Come Out Against Homophobia

Almost 30 players and coaches of the Australian Football Players Association have signed up to take part in a campaign to promote acceptance of homosexuality in the sport. Last year, Australian Football League executive, Andrew Demetriou, stated publicly that homophobia had no place in football. The publicity campaign, which consists of photos of players and coaches holding hand-lettered signs promoting inclusion and acceptance, is slated to start close to May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia. The fact that there is no *out* player in the league is indicative of the anti-gay atmosphere in the sport—an atmosphere the league is hoping to change with the publicity campaign.

Vancouver - Winner of Gay Top Model

It was a close race all the way until the last moment—but the night of April 1, 2010 will stay in the mind of Fraser for a long time. That's when he won the title of GAY TOP MODEL 2010. The fun, exciting, educational project that raises visibility and funds for Friends for Life Society was a great hit for the third season in a row. The spectacular finale attracted the cream of the crop from the GLBT community of Vancouver, and amazing fans and friends of the project all came out to cheer for their favourite.

Fraser takes home the title and the contract with I Model Management, as well as the bon bon Bodywear Award and Double-Take2 Photogenic Award, among many prizes from our sponsors. But...the three-way tie for second place was the talk of the rest of the night.

Producer Terry Costa admits that coming in to the grand finale, TOP 5 of the 10 finalists were merely a few points from each other—but a tie in the finale was definitely a first, and not expected. Toban Ralston, Riley Cox and Rob Goddard all ended the evening with identical scores—tying for Second Place.

Watch for Fraser in the Fashion Section of next month's issue of ***OUTLOOKS***!

Photo : Nicholas Jang - double-take2.ca Styling : Toban Ralston

Calgary - GAYmazing Race: May 8, 2010

The GAYmazing Race is a city-wide photo scavenger hunt, designed to both help bring people in Calgary's GLTBA community together, and fundraise for Pride Calgary 2010, (r)evolution!

Whether you're new to the city of Calgary, or you've lived here for years, the GAYmazing Race is a guaranteed way to discover new queer friendly places, show your superhero skills, and get great prizes!

Team members will be given clues that lead them from location to location, and they will have to do something different and exciting at each stop.

Creativity scores you extra points. Just because you may be the first team to finish the race, it doesn't guarantee that you'll win. We're looking for creative team names and representation through costumes.

Winners will be announced at the GAYmazing Race after-party (8 p.m. to close) at a secret location to be revealed in the last clue! Don't worry, you will have ample time to call friends and get them there to join in the fun!

Registration forms are avail-able on the Pride Calgary website **pridecalgary.ca**.

Toronto - Pride Toronto named Best Festival 2009

The national Canadian Event Industry's 13th annual Star Awards Gala had special meaning for Pride Toronto, as the organization walked away with the Best Festival in Canada for 2009—a prestigious award that it has taken for the third time.

"We are thrilled to have all the hard work by our staff and volunteers recognized through the receipt of this award," says Tracey Sandilands, Executive Director of Pride Toronto. "We had been nominated in two other categories, namely Best Event Representing a Culture and Outstanding Logistical Achievement; but, for us, Best Festival is really the premier award."

Pride Toronto previously won Best Festival in 2004 and 2005. The 2009 award was presented at an Oscars-style event held at the Atlantis Pavilion on Friday, March 26, 2010. The Canadian Event Industry Awards are the marks of achievement in the Canadian event industry. The

Star Awards program has been running successfully in Canada for 13 years and, in that time, it has presented over 400 awards to Canadian producers, designers, chefs, entertainers, caterers, marketers and planners from every area of the industry.

"Receiving the award is a great honour for us and a good way to complement our planning for the 2010 festival," says Sandilands. Pride Toronto recently announced that Cyndi Lauper will headline its 30th anniversary festival on the first weekend in July, this year.

Vancouver - Retro Design and Antiques Fair

175 Tables of Fun, Fabulous Finds and Drop-In Appraisals Too!

On Sunday, June 13, 2010, the Retro Design & Antiques Fair, summer edition, returns to Vancouver's Commercial Drive—considered one of Canada's hippest and most colourful neighbourhoods. The 175 different vendors participating in this fun, one-day fair are what make it unique to the city, and what guarantee the huge variety and sheer volume of antiques, memorabilia, and funky retro collectibles, all in one place at one time.

Expect a great selection of vintage and estate jewellery, mid-century Modernist decor, linens and textiles, old kitchen collectibles, retro glam accessories, collector dolls and toys, pop culture classics, boho and shabby chic design, country stuff, advertising and memorabilia, period lighting, decorative pottery and glass, sterling silver, and much, much more...

PLUS - Learn All About Your Vintage and Collectible Treasures!

Ever wonder about the history of that funky old brooch you inherited, or the value of that brightly coloured glass vase you snapped up at a garage sale? Drop-in appraisals will be available all day on a first-come-first-served basis. Items should be small enough to carry, with a maximum of three items per person allowed. Each verbal appraisal is $7, or three items for $20.

The appraisals will be conducted by Gale Pirie, an accredited member of the Canadian Personal Property Appraisers Group, with many years of experience in valuing estate goods. She recently returned from a busy tour of western cities as an appraiser with CBC's Canadian Antiques Roadshow, and we're delighted that she's bringing her knowledge and expertise to Vancouver's Retro Design & Antiques Fair!

For more information, please visit **www.21cpromotions.com/antiques_fair/index.html**.

Charlottetown - Abegweit Rainbow Collective (ARCPEI)

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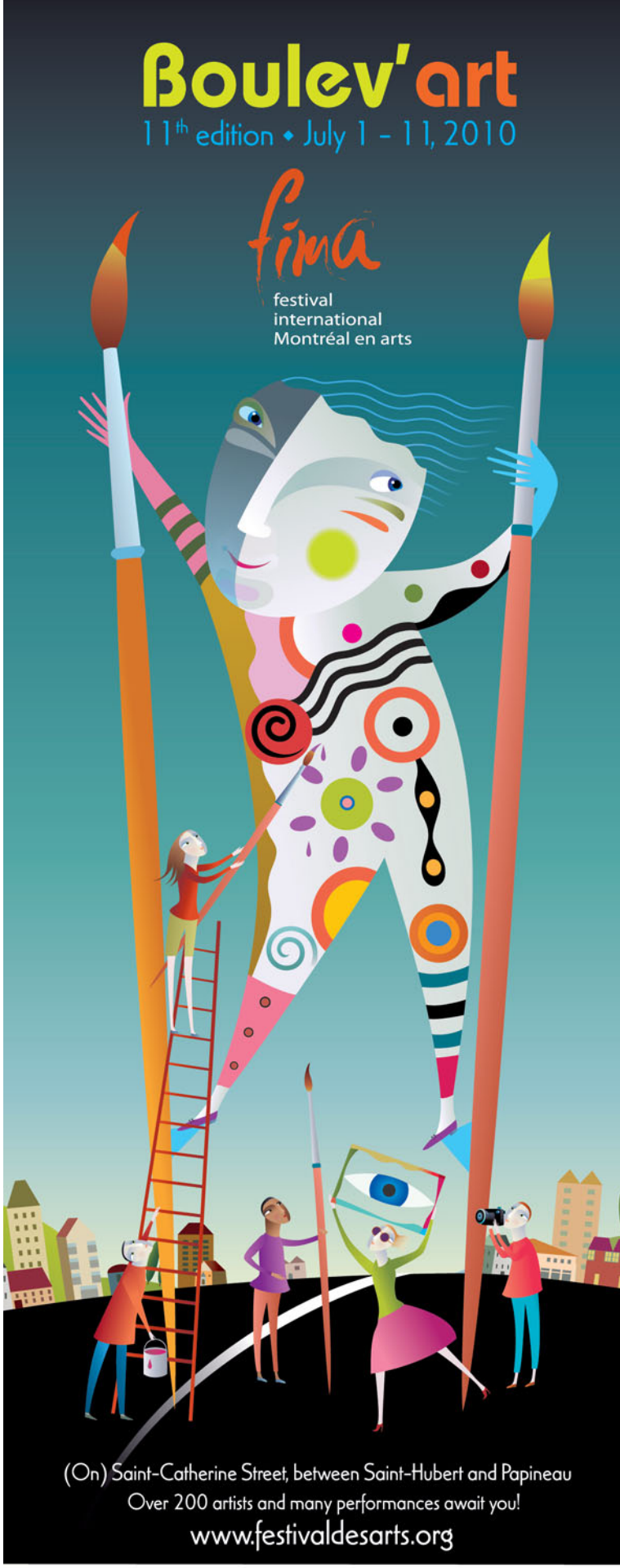
Abegweit Rainbow Collective offers an urban night club experience in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, with fast and friendly hospitality to add to your night of enjoyment! We play nothing but the hottest dance music that you want to hear, combined with the most current dance tracks from across the planet! We encourage requests of your favorite dance music! Our dance parties offer Prince Edward Island the only 100 percent gay-friendly/operated event where you can party safely with your friends, thanks to our very own professional security on site! In addition, we offer professional club lighting combined with our crisp sound to ensure a great experience! The party will unfold on Charlottetown's largest dance floor! Come party with us at the Studio located in the Confederation Centreof the Arts, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. **Our dance party dates are: May 15, May 29, June 12, and June 26.** Any updates will be posted at **www.arcofpei.com**.



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~ KEVIN ALDERSON, Ph.D., R. Psych.

Couch Talk

Gay Men Married to Women

I remember soon after coming out several years ago, I was sitting in my boyfriend's apartment when his friend asked me, "How could you be gay and still marry a woman?" His judging voice and demeanour immediately put me on the defensive, and I remember wanting to retaliate somehow on this 28-year old %&*#@! But I also didn't know if I had a really good answer either. He was 28, I was 37 or so at the time, and his question also made me feel sad that I had not come out sooner.

Now, I have some answers, based on what we know from psychological research regarding this topic. An article from Czechoslovakia in 1965 discouraged gay men from marrying women, because most would fail. Another researcher reported in 1971 that, back then, marriage counsellors in Belgium, who were mostly drawn from the priesthood, also strongly dissuaded gay men from marrying. Despite such cautions, studies conducted in the US, the Netherlands, Denmark, and West Germany have reported that about 20 percent of gay men have been married heterosexually at least once.

Why has this happened, and why does it still occur? There are several reasons provided by researchers who have studied this topic by finding out from gay men who have had the experience. The main reasons (not in any particular order) include the following:

1. Internalized homophobia around the time of marriage.
2. Belief that there would be negative societal reactions to being gay.
3. It seemed natural.
4. Having family-centred values and/or a desire for children and family life.
5. They were in love.
6. Belief that marriage would eliminate homosexual desire.
7. Perception that there is a lack of intimacy in the gay world.
8. Social and family pressure to marry.

Other reasons less commonly cited for getting married were (a) the wife had become pregnant, (b) pressure from the girlfriend, (c) everyone else was getting married, (d) acting on advice from a doctor or priest, (e) work/occupation reasons, and (f) loneliness.

There are certainly cultural, societal, and/or religious reasons that also explain why some gay men marry women. For example, getting married is an expectation in most Muslim countries (not to mention that homosexual behaviour is punishable by death in some countries). Some religions, such as Orthodox Judaism, fundamentalist Christianity, and Islamic faiths are opposed to same-gender behaviour; thus leaving only opposite-gender behaviour as a viable alternative.

Although the general consensus is that most mixed-orientation marriages will eventually end in divorce, some mixed-orientation marriages do, in fact, survive. Some of these marriages are sexless, mind you, and sexual problems are common within the marriage as well. Furthermore, expecting heterosexually-married gay men to abstain from having sex with men is often futile, as few will keep the agreement.

For mixed-orientation marriages to work, it is usually necessary that the couple reach a mutual agreement to allow the husband to have extramarital sex with men. Other helpful ingredients include honesty, open communication, receiving support from peers, receiving counselling, and also taking time to decide what is right for them. In effect, the husband needs to be empathetic to his wife and the wife needs to be flexible.

A study of some gay men married to women in the Philippines suggested that these men did not see their homosexuality as having any effect on their ability to fulfill familial responsibilities, with one exception: their sexual relations with their wives, if they were still occurring, were negatively affected. It is often surprising to many heterosexual and queer individuals alike to find out that most gay men are capable of having sex with women. Sexual behaviour can be engaged in for many reasons, and sexual desire is not required for men to become erect or to ejaculate. Bodies are bodies—they respond to physical stimulation, whatever might be causing it (like what happens when you jog without underwear! Yum.)

As I see it, it is, unfortunately, straight women who often end up having to sacrifice the most when mixed-orientation marriages do continue. Having sex is an important part of marriage, and when it is less than satisfying or nonexistent, it creates a strain for most people who have an active sex drive. Most women have a hard time letting their husbands be sexual with someone else—whether male or female. To do so successfully, the woman is going to have to think more like most men. By this, I mean they will need to clearly separate love and sex. Furthermore, and also sadly I might add, some gay men are going to fall in love with another man. Then, the situation becomes especially difficult for both husband and wife. O

References can be found on page 61.

Kevin Alderson can be contacted by confidential email at **alderson@ucalgary.ca**, or by confidential voice mail at 403-605-5234.

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Illustration: Perry Mah

Mistress Manners

Dear Mistress Manners:

I met my current boyfriend during PRIDE. It was very beautiful—we both agree it was love at first sight. When we went on our first date, however, I found out he was already dating someone for years—his roommate! The possibility of a threesome/trio was ideal; but I wasn't thrilled with the idea of taking part in their "open" relationship, much less be the third guy. I did like my boyfriend though, and it wasn't easy to let go of him just like that. Needless to say, we're dating now!

We started seeing each other more often. Evening dates became full-day programs, and I found myself sleeping more at their house than mine. The second guy (Y) then realized I had more than just a fling for Mr. Right (X). He started getting jealous and tirelessly tried to make me like him too. Time goes by (and to make the story short) they decide to break up. Since X was financially entangled with Y, moving out was going to be more complicated than Y thought it could be. Then the question was popped: "Why don't you live here with us?"

It made sense at the time. My rent would go to their pockets, I would be with my new boyfriend and the ex-boyfriend (Y), would be happy about it all.

Then Y started getting jealous and overly needy/annoying about everything. I understood that it wasn't easy to live with someone who you "loved" and see him with this new guy you wanted for yourself.

Now, if I get home and don't say "hi," I'm ignoring him. If I am not feeling well because of work, family problems (they hate that I am gay!) or any other issues I may have. I can't have time to myself to go to my room, or read a book for myself, or anything, really.

I don't have my privacy, my space—nothing! I want to cry all day long for being somewhat stupid in choosing to live with a boyfriend and his ex.

What do I do?

~ Too Much Togetherness

Dear Too Much Togetherness:

In a word: **move**. This is what bachelor suites are made for. It sounds like a complicated situation between all of you and, if it were me, well, Mistress Manners would be so out of there so fast.

Mistress Manners hearts poly unions and creative living arrangements; but it seems pretty clear that this one is not working. Perhaps it was a case of "too much, too soon," or maybe your boyfriend's ex (or near ex) needs to learn to treat others with respect. But remember that you have other choices, too. You can put your rent dollars in anyone's pockets. You don't need to give your toonies to someone who regularly makes you cry.

Frankly, I would come down a little heavier on your boyfriend, who seems to be okay with all of this for the two of you. It's not working, and it's not a good place to foster a new relationship when you're constantly feeling the drain of the ex—right there in your living space.

Our homes are our castles, even if they're just rooms in shared houses. And you, my friend, need to find a room in a shared house that doesn't make you crazy. So give your notice and pack your bags. Mistress Manners is pretty confident that no matter what your next living situation is, it will feel like the Welcome Wagon is holding your hand and baking you a pie.

Please contact Mistress Manners with your questions at: **mistressmanners@gmail.com**

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Thoughts from the Hill

~ DALE SMITH

This summer marks five years since Bill C-38 passed, making same-sex civil marriage legal across Canada.

This month's question: Looking back, what do you remember most about the debate in Parliament around that bill?

NDP MP Bill Siksay (Burnaby-Douglas, BC): I just remember the debate being a lot of work, and there were a lot of people who were very bound up and caught up in it. It was nerve wracking in the sense that people felt very, very strongly about it and personally very connected to the issue, no matter what side they were on, and that I myself personally felt that connection. I remember it being a very exhausting and tense time. Like all of these things, because people felt so strongly about it. When we had a victory, in a way, it was hard to celebrate it because you didn't want to stick it in their face in some inappropriate way.

I remember when it finally passed, leaving the House and coming out into a really humid June night and being greeted by a bunch of supporters of gay and lesbian marriage who were really excited. I was with Libby Davies, and we came out and we were exhausted, and they were really excited, and it felt great.

Liberal MP Scott Brison (Kings-Hants, Nova Scotia): I remember that, at the time, I was part of the cabinet, and joking at caucus and joking with other cabinet ministers that I would support this legislation on one condition—that we didn't make it compulsory, because I had absolutely no intention of ever getting married. On June 28, C-38 passed in the House of Commons, 155 to 138. On July 21, Maxime asked me to marry him in a restaurant in Sitges, Spain—a lovely restaurant on the Mediterranean—after a terrific dinner and too much champagne, and I said yes. We had a fairly Victorian extended engagement, and we were married over two years later on August 18, 2007. And I can't imagine life not being married to Maxime today. On a very personal level, it's had a very huge and positive effect on my life.

What was remarkable with our wedding was the amount of support and enthusiasm for our marriage that came from across Canada, and around the world, and particularly from our own communities in rural Nova Scotia. People in my riding were genuinely excited for us and supportive of us. And, try as hard as they could, the national media had a lot of difficulty finding any negative comments about our marriage from anybody in our communities—the level of support we received was tremendous.

This brought Maxime and me not just closer to each other, but closer to a much broader community of people who love us and support us. I think that one of the keys to marriage is that it creates a much broader community that will support you and your union during the good times and the bad times. So, five years later, I couldn't be happier, and I expect there's a reasonable chance that Maxime may say the same thing.

Conservative Senator Nancy Ruth (Ontario - Cluny): It was, and is, a struggle for me; but one with a joyous moment. It was exciting as I stood five years ago to vote for same-sex marriage, the sun streaming into my eyes. The Senate vote was clearly in favour. I sat down after the Clerk called my name, looked across the floor at another queer Senator. We smiled at each other, and knew we'd been a part of changing the world.

That moment was exciting; but what a struggle I had to get there. I had thought about being absent for the vote. I couldn't quite vote against it. As a woman, I felt uncomfortable with this law—this predominately male drive to be treated the "same" as other couples, within the law. Since 1980, I have spent a lot of time with other women fighting for and developing "equality rights" in the Charter. We founded LEAF, [www.leaf.ca] Canada's first equality rights litigation fund, which developed much of the early Supreme Court law on equality rights. That law focused winning rights for women on "difference" and affirmative action—and not on being treated the "same." Being treated the same—as men—has always been a part of the problem. With Charter equality rights, the Supreme Court acknowledged that women are different than men, that different life experiences must be taken into account. Women get pregnant, women are paid less, promoted less, women are raped more frequently than men, women are sexually harassed more than men—one women every six minutes—women live longer than men, and so on.

To have 20 years of equality litigation challenged by gay men who wanted "equality" to be premised on "sameness" was a huge threat for me and to me. I believed that, when the same-sex marriage case was won in the Ontario courts, it would mean the end of the "difference" basis of women's equality litigation. There is no way in which women are equal in Canadian society. Hey, we still can't get a gender-neutral National Anthem. The jury is still out as to the impact of this legal and political decision, and I still remain concerned about it. On the other hand, there are a lot of happy couples because of it. O

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from Peter's Pulpit

Papacy Digs Deeper Holes than a Prairie Dog

~ PETER CARLYLE-GORDGE

The old adage is that if you find yourself in an uncomfortable hole, the first order of business is to stop digging it deeper.

The "infallible" Pope and his minions clearly don't get it, and seem intent on burrowing their way to Australia. In fact the papal scandal involving decades of unreported sexual child abuse is becoming a sick soap opera.

Now, famed author and atheist Richard Dawkins is leading a movement which is seriously planning to have the Pope arrested when he visits Britain this September. Just as former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet was arrested at a London hospital on a Spanish warrant under the novel legal concept of "universal jurisdiction," London lawyers are assembling arguments that Pope Benedict could be held on charges of crimes against humanity: specifically child sexual slavery.

The Pope claims that he is a head of state so cannot be prosecuted; but not all lawyers agree. Can he claim diplomatic immunity? Dawkins isn't so sure, since the Vatican is an observer at the UN and not a full member. Dawkins says, "The Pope is not above or outside the law. The institutionalized concealment of child rape is a crime under any law, and demands not private ceremonies of repentance or church-funded payoffs, but justice and punishment."

He believes the Pope's claim to sovereign immunity could be challenged successfully in the UK and in the European Court of Human Rights.

Dawkins believes that child sex abuse by priests who went unpunished falls within the crimes against humanity law of the International Criminal Court.

All this could be an embarrassment to the British government, which maintains diplomatic relations with the Vatican. Victims of the scandal are also planning to disrupt the Pope's planned UK visit. The gloves—and possibly the visit—are off.

I also question why the Pope should be regarded as a head of state. Why do countries waste money appointing nuncios and ambassadors to the place? It has no army other than a few Swiss guards.

The Vatican City State came into existence with the Lateran Treaty, drawn up between the Holy See and the Kingdom of Italy on February 11, 1929, and ratified on June 7, 1929. The population comprises some 750 inhabitants, of whom about 400 have Vatican citizenship. The "country" covers an area of 108.5 acres.

Far be it from humble, non-Catholic me to pour gasoline on the little conflagration afflicting the Vatican; but the latest revelations in Ireland, Germany, Poland and other countries make it clear that the church is more interested in preserving its treasure and its earthly powers than in expressing genuine contrition.

It is well-documented that hundreds of priests had carte blanche to abuse children, both sexually and physically, without civil authorities even being notified.

This is not an attack on the Catholic religion, by the way, but on those who have aided and abetted criminal acts and besmirched the entire message of Christianity.

The real guilt goes right to the top.

New York Times writer Maureen Dowd, a Catholic, notes: "As the longtime Vatican enforcer, the arch-conservative Ratzinger—now Pope Benedict XVI—moved avidly to persecute dissenters. But with molesters, he was plodding and even merciful."

She adds: "The Church's belligerent, resentful and paranoid response to the global scandal is not working; because it now says it will cooperate with secular justice systems and that the Pope will have more meetings with victims. It is too little, too late."

The plot is thickening as the scandal seeps under the gates of St. Peter's itself. Rather than emerge from its pitiful state of denial, the Church is going on the attack. Various Vatican officials have tried to scapegoat the messengers (the media), as well as blaming Satan for invading their precincts. Jews have been blamed for the scandal as well as gays.

The Holy See was forced onto the defensive again after the Vatican Secretary of State, Tarcisio Bertone, drew a link between pedophilia and homosexuality.

After an outraged response from psychologists and gays alike, the Catholic Church in the UK was forced to issue a strongly worded condemnation of this idiot's words.

"There is no empirical data which concludes that sexual orientation is connected to child sexual abuse," said Father Marcus Stock, the General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales.

"The consensus among researchers is that the sexual abuse of children is not a question of sexual 'orientation,' whether heterosexual or homosexual, but of a disordered attraction or 'fixation.'"

In Italy, gay rights group Arcigay called the comments "false, ignoble and anti-scientific." The group's president Paolo Patane said Bertone had "confirmed the cynicism, lack of scruples and cruelty of the very same Catholic hierarchy, which for years covered up sex crimes perpetrated on thousands of innocent children."

The French government also chimed in, saying that the cardinal's inflammatory claim tried to make an "unacceptable linkage that we condemn."

The misogynistic, pederastic Vatican hole keeps getting deeper.

Do they understand the anger? Nope.

As one wag noted recently: perhaps it is time to elect a Nope in Rome. A Nope would be a nun. Surely a woman could do no worse than the ignorant, pathetic, besieged men now running this disgraceful Church. O

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Hit the Deck

It's Time to Take it Outside

There's nothing better than hanging up your winter boots and pulling out your flip-flops and margarita set in the springtime. We get such a short patio season in Canada—so we need to make the most of it and enjoy our outdoor spaces, by making them stunning and inviting.

Landscaping and outdoor renovations can get pricey fast—but there are a few things you can do that will make a big impact and not break the slush fund. It will take some work, creativity and friend bribing; but you too can make sure your outdoor living space is the hot spot this summer. Don't forget the sunscreen, too.

❶ Outdoor Furniture

You may have noticed that patio furniture doesn't come cheap. I like to hit the spring garage sales to see what treasures can be found. Think outside the box. You don't need to find a rusty metal table with an umbrella in it. Think about creating an outdoor living room with mixed chairs, couches and tables. Wood pieces can easily be sanded, primed and stained and old cushions can be recovered with outdoor fabric in a snap. If you're handy and have access to tools, think about building your own benches and using accent pillows so everyone can cozy up around a fire or on your deck.

❷ Outdoor Lighting

As with many interiors, lighting is often an afterthought. Hardware and discount stores will be bringing out plenty of options for you to consider, way beyond stringing up your Christmas lights. The trick is to keep the lighting low, but still make sure your friends can see their way over the garden hose. Try solar lights along the pathway or use floodlights pointed against the walls or fencing. These are inexpensive, and you don't need to be a contractor to put them together.

❸ Decking

A new deck might be out of your budget but a coat of stain or paint probably isn't. A quick coat can make a big difference. If your boards are splitting and nails are sticking up you may have to think about replacing the deck, this might be something you can do yourself with the help of online resources or hardware stores' workshops. And depending on what the climate is like in your part of the country you may wish to consider stamped concrete or outdoor tiles instead.

❹ Fireplaces and Fire Pits

Even on the hottest of summer nights a fire can become the centrepiece of any outdoor social. And the range of options out there ensures that there is something for every patio and deck design. From actual outdoor fireplaces, to stand-alone grated fire pits, or even as simple as a smaller fire feature in the centre of a round coffee table, most are available in wood burning, canister burning or natural gas connection options. But keep in mind your communities bylaws, not to mention those of your condo corporation. Check first.

❺ Water Features

The sound of running water is soothing and surprisingly easy to achieve. There are plenty of resources online on how to turn an old pot or sink into a custom feature. You may only need to dig as deep as a rubber basin is deep. Attach some simple tubing, and voila, you're on your way to having your own outdoor oasis.

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~ BEN BENEDICT

Diversity Officers and Hate Crimes in Canada

Eric Rozenski was assaulted by Michael Gordon after several homophobic remarks on September 27, 2009 while walking hand-in-hand with his then boyfriend following a night out. In March, Mr. Gordon, following a guilty plea, received a suspended sentence with "conditions to not associate with the victim and LGBT organizations, to abstain from alcohol and not attend any bars, and to take counseling for anger management, substance abuse and gender sensitivity training," according to a London Free Press article of March 12.

Eric Rozenski shows a few of his wounds after being assaulted on September 27, 2009 while walking hand-in-hand with his then boyfriend following homophobic remarks.

The decision upset many within gay communities across Canada, with questions as to why provisions were not added to include the hate crime. It's a common concern and misunderstanding regarding what Canada's actual Hate Crimes Legislation is, and means, as well what Canada's Police Services are doing in response.

To understand the how and why of decisions like this and present policing responses, we first need to look at a bit of history. In the introduction of a 2004 Statistics Canada report by Diane L. Beauchamp from the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, she writes, "In the early 1980s, Canada adopted the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. As of 1985, all Canadians, regardless of their race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, were legally given equal rights to the protection and benefit of the law without discrimination under Section 15 of the Charter. Although sexual orientation is not listed as a ground for discrimination in the Charter, it has been deemed by the Supreme Court of Canada (Egan v. Canada, [1995] 2 S.C.R. 513) to be an analogous ground on which claims of discrimination may be based (Hurley, 2007). On September 18, 2003, the Parliament of Canada voted to amend the Criminal Code to include sexual orientation as an identifiable characteristic for protection from hate crime under the Hate Propaganda Sections 318 and 319. The amendment added gays and lesbians to a list of other groups protected by hate crime legislation."

Equally important are the events between 1985 and 2003. A 2006 report entitled, *Addressing Hate Crime in Ontario: Final Report of the Hate Crimes Community Working Group*, to the Attorney General and the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services underscores the importance of that amendment:

"The history of the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgendered (Two Spirited) Intersexed (LGBTI) Community is one of living in fear because of one's sexual orientation. In 1986, massive police raids against bathhouses in Toronto, one of few safe places for gay men at the time, galvanized the community to campaign for basic human rights. It was not until 1986 that the Ontario Legislature voted to include sexual orientation in the Ontario Human Rights Code. There was a steady rise in hate crimes and hate incidents in the 1990s, and an unprecedented increase immediately following September 11, 2001. In the wake of a documented 93 percent increase in the number of hate crimes in Ontario in the past decade, the Government promised support for dedicated hate crime police units across the province, and strong victims' rights legislation to ensure that victims have access to information and services. The 2001 report of the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS) entitled, *Hate Crimes in Canada: An Overview of Issues and Data Sources*, indicates that the concept of 'hate' as a 'social/criminal policy concern' became apparent in the 1965 Report to the Minister of Justice of the Special

Committee on Hate Propaganda in Canada (Cohen Committee). A common theme of these reports, and many others, was that, although individual hate crimes may affect only a few victims directly, such activity creates a 'climate of malice and destructiveness to the values of our society.' "

It's interesting to note that, while the Attorney General report has several quotes of victims of racial and religious violence, there are no quotes from GLBT members of the issues they face.

With a lengthy history throughout Canada then, how do we currently define a hate crime and how are Canadian Police Services responding in ensuring the safety of all Canadians?

Sergeant Greg Cox, Media Relations Officer for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), explains it this way.

"(There's) Section 718.2 of the Criminal Code and that is not a charge—it has to do with considerations for sentencing. For example, someone can be charged with assault and if they are found guilty, one of the factors for sentencing would be if it was shown that the assault was motivated by hate based on race, religion, etc. Case law explains that if the crimes are deemed to be hate-based then the sentences should be stronger to express the public abhorrence for such conduct," says Cox. "Two sections that deal with hatred are: Section 318 which has to do with advocating Genocide (Hate Propaganda); and Section 319 which has to do with public incitement of hatred. In other words, everyone who, by communicating statements in any public place, incites hatred against any identifiable group where such incitement is likely to lead to a breach of the peace, is guilty of an offence."

In response to the varying concerns, police services across Canada have recently created the Diversity Officer position with a focus on tolerance, understanding of LGBT issues including domestic violence and hate crimes, as well as internal training and community outreach.

"The RCMP Bias-Free Strategy was established in 2004 as a proactive response to various issues related to contract policing, national security, racial profiling and recommendations from a 2003 Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission," says Cox. "Within the RCMP, there are full-time RCMP diversity officers currently in Nova Scotia, Ontario and British Columbia. National Headquarters has an officer assigned to the Bias-Free Policing file to monitor issues at the national level."

They also began tracking hate crimes in 2005 and at the end of 2010 for the first time ever, a "Full-year reporting of hate-motivated crimes will be available for the entire RCMP," says Cox. "Once these numbers are collected and analyzed, we will be in a better position to begin identifying trends and allocating resources more effectively."

There are dedicated officers like Constable Lynn MacDonald of the Diversity Resources Unit, Calgary Police Service, and Constable Marcel Marcellin, Diversity Officer with the London Police Service.

Constable Marcellin outlines how the London position came into existence following a very turbulent ten-year period for London's LGBT community.

"If the crimes are deemed to be hate-based then the sentences should be stronger to express the public abhorrence for such conduct."

"It was spearheaded by Brad Caruthers and created in 2006 by a number of senior officers who felt it would be beneficial in dealing with some of the gaps in services with new Canadian communities," says Marcellin. "I also deliver programs internally on issues to ensure that we are not doing anything that would be considered discriminatory. I also ensure that we have a system that is inclusive and that we recruit appropriately to ensure that we have culturally appropriate process."

"Accordingly, we started on January 7 with our new diversity training program. By May 6, 2010 all 600 officers will have been trained on GLBT issues including issues of domestic violence and what we as officers need to know. My job is to look at those issues and see where we can protect the community. One thing that we are doing here is acknowledging that hate crimes do occur and that they are under-reported. We've undertaken an awareness program called RHVP—Report Homophobic Violence Period. It also has a reporting piece where victims can report hate crimes anonymously. This is seeking just to get the information for an accurate picture of what's happening in the community, even if it doesn't lead to charges. Through that process, we hope that people will become more comfortable in identifying themselves and taking on hate crimes."

The Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police (OACP) Diversity Committee is another recent resource that brings diversity officers from all Ontario Police Services to exchange information, and share ideas of best practices. The Summer 2009 issue of the OACP's HQ Magazine featured two articles on diversity issues designed to both challenge and inspire police leaders including Beyond Diversity to Human Equity by diversity expert Trevor Wilson of TWI Inc., and Diversity Lessons Learned by Thunder Bay Police Service Chief Robert Herman, as an illustration of the response to community needs.

Ottawa Police Service.

London's Homophobia-Biphobia-Trans-phobia (HBT) Working Group reminds all LGBT Canadians that if "you experience or witness a hate-motivated incident," then report it.

As for hate crimes and laying charges, Constable Marcellin reiterates, "A hate crime is a funny thing because there is no such thing as a hate crime on its own. It's usually attached to another charge like assault. If we have enough evidence to add that hate crime, then it's up to the judge to take it into account. The evidence we need is that during the offence the attacker was indeed committing a hate crime. There's a misunderstanding around what the rules are that make a hate crime, and it needs to be proven." O

Criminal Code of Canada: Hate Provisions - Summary

"Hate" is defined as a crime under two parts of Canada's Criminal Code: Sections 318 and 319. To convict anyone under the Code, very specific proof is required: both of the criminal act itself, and of the intention or motivation to commit the crime. It isn't enough that someone has said something hateful or untrue. The courts will only find someone guilty if he or she has contravened the Code exactly, and if he or she did it deliberately. In most cases, hate propaganda communicated through the Internet is an offence under the Criminal Code. Amendments to the Code, made under the Anti-Terrorism Act in December 2001, further clarify measures and offences regarding Internet hate crimes.

Section 318: Advocating Genocide

The criminal act of "advocating genocide" is defined as supporting or arguing for the killing of members of an "identifiable group"—persons distinguished by their colour, race, religion, ethnic origin or sexual orientation. The intention or motivation would be the destruction of members of the targeted group. Any person who promotes genocide is guilty of an indictable offence, and liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years.

Defining Genocide

Section 318 defines genocide as any acts committed with intent to destroy an identifiable group—such as killing members of the group, or deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the group's physical destruction.

Section 319(1): Public Incitement of Hatred

The crime of "publicly inciting hatred" has four main elements. To contravene the Code, a person must:

- communicate statements,
- in a public place,
- incite hatred against an identifiable group,
- in such a way that there will likely be a breach of the peace.

Under Section 319, "communicating" includes communicating by telephone, broadcasting or other audible or visible means; a "public place" is one to which the public has access by right or invitation, express or implied; and "statements" means words (spoken, written or recorded), gestures, and signs or other visible representations.

All the above elements must be proven for a court to find an accused guilty of either:

- an indictable offence, for which the punishment is imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years; or
- an offence punishable on summary conviction.

Section 319(2) defines the additional offence of communicating statements, other than in private conversation, that willfully promote hatred against an identifiable group.

Section 319(3) identifies acceptable defences. It indicates that no person shall be convicted of an offence if the statements in question:

- are established to be true;
- were relevant to any subject of public interest, the discussion of which was for the public benefit, and if, on reasonable grounds, it was believed to be true;
- were expressed in good faith, it was attempted to establish by argument and opinion on a religious subject; or
- were expressed in good faith, it was intended to point out, for the purpose of removal, matters tending to produce feelings of hatred toward an identifiable group in Canada

Warrants of Seizure

Section 320 of the Criminal Code provides for the seizure and forfeiture of physical hate propaganda material kept on any premises for distribution or sale.

Section 320.1 added under the Anti-Terrorism Bill in 2001, allows the courts to order publicly available hate propaganda to be deleted from computer systems, such as a website. The individuals responsible for posting the offensive material are given the opportunity to convince the court that it does not constitute hate propaganda. This provision applies to any hate propaganda located on a Canadian computer system, regardless of where the owner of the material is located.

Additional Hate Provisions

The courts may define the motivations of hate, bias or prejudice as aggravating factors when sentencing an offender for other of- fences, such as assault, damage to property, threatening, or harassment. The result is usually a more severe punishment (section 718.2(a)(i)).

Source: Media Awareness Network:
www.mediaawareness.ca/english/resources/legislation/canadian_law/federal/criminal_code/criminalcode_hate.cfm

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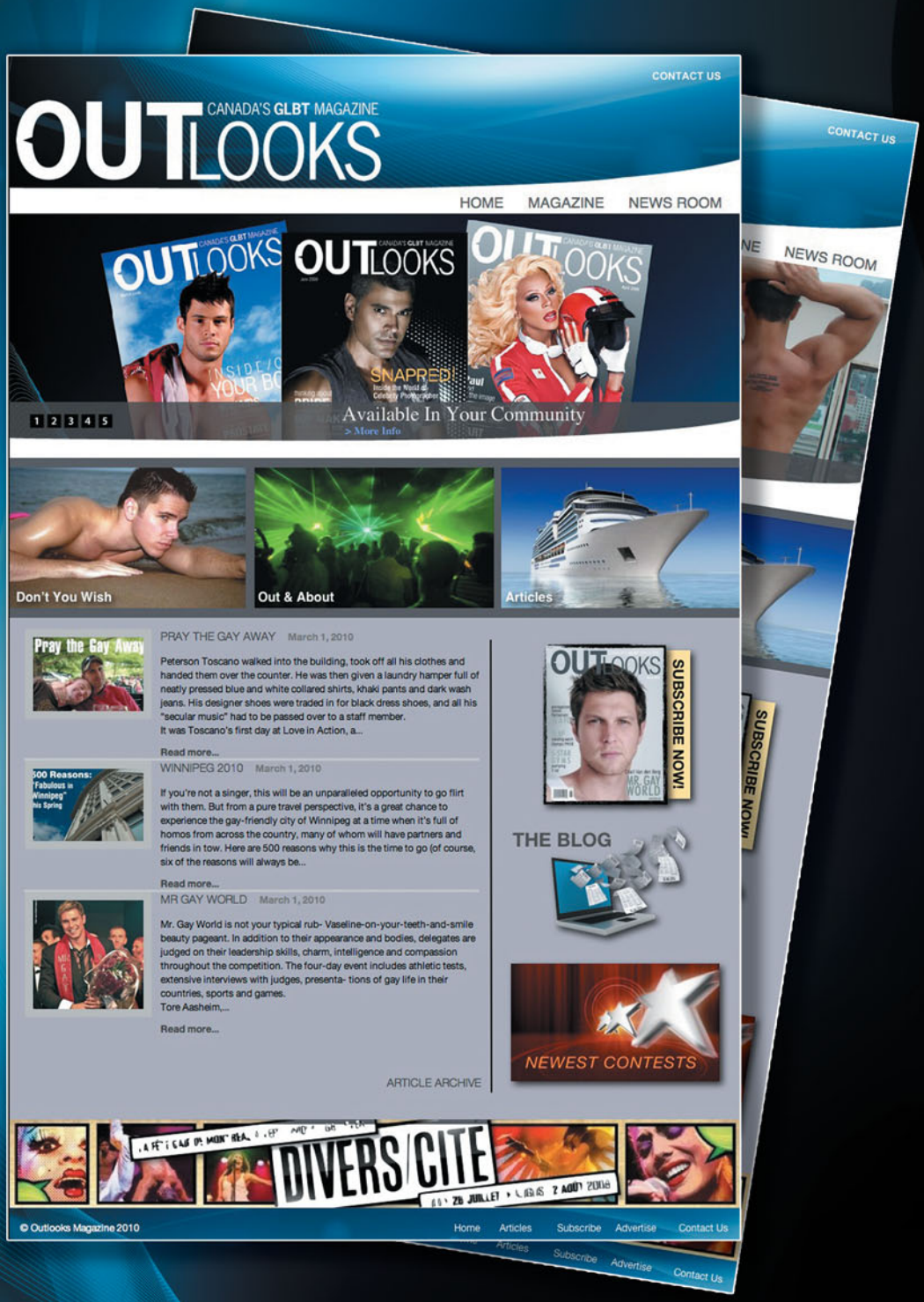

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~ DALE SMITH

Same-Sex Marriage in Canada – Five Years Later

On July 20, 2005, Bill C-38, titled *An Act respecting certain aspects of legal capacity for marriage for civil purposes*, or the Civil Marriage Act for short, received Royal Assent and passed into Canadian law. But the groundwork for that passage lay in the work done by a special legislative committee that met through May and part of June of that year.

Unlike most bills, which pass through a standing House committee or a sub-committee of one of the standing committees, in order to be properly studied and its technicalities evaluated, it had been decided that, because of the contentious nature of same-sex marriage, a special legislative committee was warranted, and was staffed by MPs from all four parties.

Liberal MP Mike Savage, who represents the Nova Scotia riding of Dartmouth-Coal Harbour, was one of the members of that committee at the behest of his party's whip.

"C-38 was a piece of legislation that I felt very strongly about," Savage says. "It was also something that I knew was going to be difficult in the riding…but it was one of those issues that was never in doubt for me, that I felt very strongly about both from a legal point of view, a human rights point of view, and a spiritual point of view, that it was the right thing to do. I decided early on that I wanted to be as supportive of it as I could."

For Savage there was also an element of the bill that was close to home—his sister is a lesbian in a committed relationship, and he is godfather to one of her two daughters.

"I wasn't really planning on speaking about my sister in the House of Commons; but it seemed relevant when I spoke to the issue—that's all," Savage says, referring to his speech in the House on the bill.

The work on the committee was long, and there were a great many witnesses who were against same-sex marriage who appeared before it after an agreement was reached with the Conservatives to hear them out.

"You hate to say it, but you become a little bit numb to some of it," Savage says. "You do kind of get into a mindset that you are respectful of the witnesses; but you get into a mindset that is like a war of attrition to some extent—you have to listen, respect their point of view, but at the end of the day, it is about getting this process done so that we can have this important human right enshrined in the country."

According to Savage, it wasn't always easy to listen, especially when he found some of the testimony to be nasty. "There were times I wondered how Bill [Siksay], as a gay man, was able to sit through all the testimony that we heard; but he did admirably well, as did Réal Ménard."

Siksay was the NDP's representative on the committee, and recalls the period as stressful.

"In the middle of it, my own body reacted strongly to it," he says. "I got a stress problem—not one of my normal stress diseases; but it acted up on me, so it had a real physical implication for me personally in the middle of all of that."

Nevertheless, he found the debates fascinating, and found that several of the witnesses surprised him.

"One of the debates that I'll never forget was the World Sikh Organization, that understood the religious freedom aspect of moving forward with gay and lesbian marriage in the secular context," Siksay says. "It was a real surprise that they came and incredibly and articulately defended the importance of moving forward on gay and lesbian marriage in this secular context, and how they appreciated the protection for religious freedom that was included in the bill, and that the bill ultimately represented.

"For me, that was a turning point where I saw that there was clear thinking about this legislation in the broader community, and that we knew that we had support from all kinds of different allies on the issue. But that was one that really rang true and made a big impression on me personally."

The bill passed the House of Commons with a vote of 158 to 133, with three Conservatives voting in favour, one Liberal resigning from Cabinet rather than vote for the bill, another Liberal leaving caucus, Belinda Stronach famously having crossed the floor to become a Liberal cabinet minister, and one NDP MP removed from her critic duties for voting against. But even the Liberal caucus was not united behind the bill.

"As a Liberal, you're always in this position where you've got these wide, divergent points of view, and a lot of pieces of legislation where there are splits," Savage says. "What I appreciated was that, by and large, our committee stayed together. I have a lot of respect for some of the people who were opposed to civil marriage in our caucus—people like John McKay, Paul Szabo, and folks like that who simply could not support it. They voted against it, and in some cases maybe they stayed away; but there really wasn't very much acrimony that I recall within the party over this issue."

From the Commons, the bill moved over to the Senate, where Liberal Senator Serge Joyal acted as the bill's mover.

"It was less [acrimonious] than in the Commons; because, as you know in the Commons, they always have the pressure of their constituents, almost to the point of blackmail," Joyal says. The arguments of large interest groups who felt that the bill was an attack on their beliefs were never far away.

"Those arguments were raised in the Commons and were very powerful for MPs who were in the hands of large groups with religious allegiance," Joyal says. "In the Senate, the fact that we are independent from an immediate constituency who [would] hold us hostage, to a point, in the next election, gave the debate in the Senate a different tone, and put the debate on a more objective level, to the substance of the objective of the bill."

The bill passed the Senate on a vote of 47 to 21, and was signed into law by Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Beverly McLachlin, in her capacity as Deputy Governor General.

Liberal Irwin Cotler, a respected human rights lawyer in his own right, was the justice minister overseeing the passage of the bill into law.

"I think the whole process of constitutionalizing same-sex marriage in Canada, in retrospect, and even at the time, was one of the more dramatic constitutional encounters that this country ever experienced," Cotler says.

Indeed, it was a process that involved government and Parliament as a whole, the courts, civil society, and the media.

"The process began with Parliament in fact, [with] the enactment of the Constitution Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms," Cotler says. "This itself was a historic constitutional moment in which we not only constitutionalized the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, as almost a centre-piece of not only our laws but our identity as a people; but we constitutionalized fundamental principles like equality, freedom of religion, and I mention those two which ultimately underpin same-sex marriage itself."

Cotler traces the government's involvement with a position paper in 2002 on the issue of same-sex marriage—the year of the twentieth anniversary of the Charter—and the series of hearings across the country it held. During this time, court decisions began

to affirm that same-sex marriage was in fact constitutional, which led to a process of a reference question on same-sex marriage handed to the Supreme Court of Canada. The process culminated in the adoption of C-38.

Throughout the process, Cotler continued to engage with various groups around the country on the issue, and was even caught between his own wife's published beliefs that civil unions should have been an acceptable compromise rather than civil marriage—though he responded that the difference between himself and his wife was that he had a responsibility to uphold the constitution and the decision of the courts, which was to allow for civil marriage.

Cotler sees the decision to focus on civil, rather than religious marriage, as one of the defining points of the legislation. It was also a way to strike the constitutional balance between equality rights for gays and lesbians, and religious freedom.

"That was unique legislation—in the rest of the world, they have not yet been able to put together these two founda-tional principles in a way that we enacted in Canada," Cotler says. "I think you can see that, if you look back at the drama at the time, it has been replaced by an under-standing that Canada did something that will stand the test of time, not only domestically, but it will become a model internationally."

Five years later, the sky hasn't fallen, the earth hasn't opened up, and civilization as we know it hasn't collapsed. Meanwhile, same-sex couples have been able to access the institution of marriage.

"A hundred years ago, Protestants and Catholics didn't marry," Savage says. "Fifty years ago, blacks and whites didn't marry, and now we're going to be saying five years ago, gays and lesbians couldn't marry and now they can. Let's celebrate that." O

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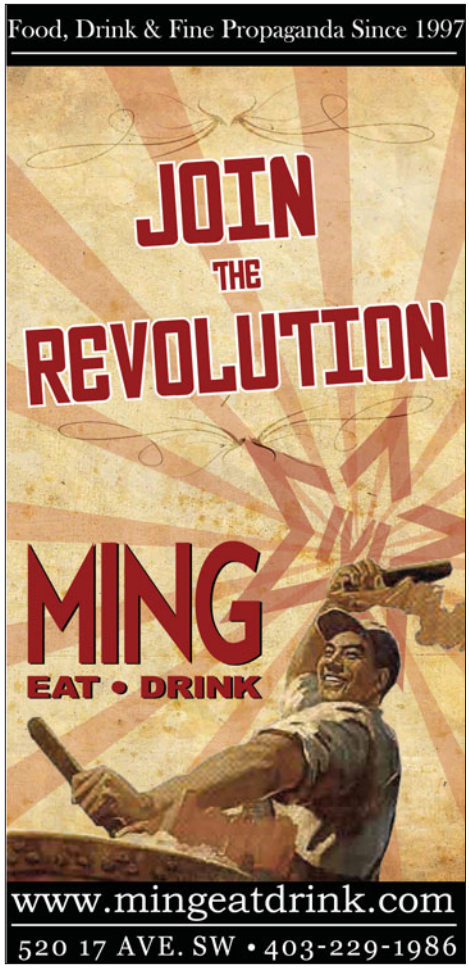
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Canadian

In *Ejaculations From the Charm Factory*, Sky Gilbert's witty and often biting memoir on life in the Golden Days at Toronto's Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, the artist walks a nostalgic tightrope over Toronto's earliest theatre circus, in an era when many of the arts institutions we know and love today sprouted up from the woodwork to throw an edgier, contemporary mask on Canadian theatre forever.

Now, over 30 years old and under the Artistic Direction of Brendan Healey, North America's biggest queer arts institution has become all (and sometimes none) of the things Gilbert ever imagined. Regardless, and if the juicy memoir is any indication, it's taken a helluva lot of "drama" to get there along the way.

In this Arts and Culture themed edition of Canadian Trailblazers, we pay tribute to not only the four Artistic Directors who have nurtured Buddies over three decades, but to some of our best Trailblazing artists whose lives intersected with Buddies at various stages in their careers. We've even littered it with some of our own dear Sky's "ejaculations." And, as other artists, academics, and audiences remember these directors and the myriad of successful artists who did some of their earliest work at Buddies, we pay tribute to that proud, queer, experimental theatre we can call our own.

We asked a mere sampling of current and former Buddies' artists to comment on how Buddies has played a role in their lives. Having worked behind-the-scenes and centre stage, this cross-section of artists have made waves across the country in their own right, and in this issue, we salute them too for their contribution to art with a queerer edge!

"This memoir spans the 18 years, from 1979 to 1997, when I was Artistic Director of Buddies in Bad Times Theatre in Toronto. It was a time when my life intersected, intimately, with two worlds—theatre and sexual politics. And I was able to watch both change, gradually but fundamentally."

~ Sky Gilbert, *Ejaculations From the Charm Factory*

Trailblazers

A Fistful of Buddies

Bryden MacDonald

Writer/director Bryden MacDonald is the author of plays like *Whale Riding Weather*, *Divinity Bash/nine lives* and *The Weekend Healer*. His theatrical interpretations of the works of Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchell and Carole Pope include the acclaimed *Shaking the Foundations*. One of MacDonald's most recent plays, *With Bated Breath*, debuted at Centaur Theatre last season in Montréal, a city where MacDonald has spent the last decade writing, teaching and directing.

Following up on the premiere of *With Bated Breath*, what's in store now for the play, and are you working on anything new?

"There hasn't even been a nibble concerning a second production of *With Bated Breath*. And one cannot help but acknowledge a sniff of homophobia, or certainly fear of exploration of sexuality, out there. Canadian producers know about the play, but I'm certainly not going to bully anyone into producing it. I know it's a good play and sadly, that may have to be enough. But I had a fantastic well-received premiere in Montréal and Talonbooks is publishing. So, I move on. I've recently relocated to Halifax, my old stomping ground, and I am forming a theatre company (I know, just shoot me) intended to explore Queer ideas, with my pal Hugo Dann. We're called fluffer: theatre to keep you up. And I continue to write and teach and direct."

As you and Daniel MacIvor are both successfully produced Nova Scotian writer/directors with a "queer" edge in some of your work, do you have any advice for other up and coming Maritime artists who are following that same path?

"Quit now! Seriously (though I'm not entirely kidding about the "quit now") I would say never get too caught up with what others might think of you. People by nature, are gossips—and some quite toxic. So fuck them. In the end, all you've got is yourself—so why not just be yourself, or at least work to being your better self."

Between you, Daniel MacIvor, Sky Gilbert and Brad Fraser, who is Canada's biggest "bad boy" playwright, and where does one earn that title, anyway?

"Definitely me, though some may beg to differ. However, my "bad boy" status was defined more by the bar room than the work. I still say that most of my best lines are on the floor of the old St. Charles Tavern embedded in yeast. But my concern is, why, when pushing 50, I am still a "bad boy"? Where the hell are the new bad boys? Are their voices being squashed?"

Productions of your work have debuted on the Buddies stage but also premiered at other major Canadian theatres. Can you talk about what it was like to get your earliest, perhaps "queerer"-themed plays produced?

> "Strangely, I was able to create, from my imagination, details about a world that I was about to enter and knew very little about. And, significantly, there was a musical called *Buddies In Bad Times*, which was a collection of songs by Jacques Prévert and Joseph Kosma."
>
> ~ Sky Gilbert, *Ejaculations...*

"It was never easy, but I had a better chance back then. *Whale Riding Weather* was a risk for Factory Theatre I suppose. But I felt protected and nurtured. And there weren't so many fucking dramaturges around. Christ, the dramaturges: you can barely swing a cat without hitting one these days. Fifteen or so years ago, the theatre was far less conservative. Ideas were fresh, dangerous, and not so cerebral. We were able to explore, and fail. There is no room for failure these days, and without failure you can't grow. So I sense something stagnant in the air. And there are just too many goddamn musicals."

As a writer, how do you think Buddies has evolved over the years, and where do you see it going now in terms of its role in queer arts (or hope it will go)?

"Buddies was a safe place for me during Sky's day. We were given the opportunity to sink or swim. To learn by doing. Sarah took a chance and produced my Rough Trade show: five hot chicks doing [Carole] Pope acoustic. It was a fantastic experience, and a wonderful show. But, it went nowhere after that. I suppose a bunch of dykes expressing themselves was too much for the mainstream. I didn't work at Buddies during David's time. But I think Brendan is smart and creative. He's got some youth on his side. It's a younger person's job I think. Programming could get dreary otherwise. It's a hugely diverse community he has to service. I wish him the best, it can't be an easy ship to helm."

Do you have any memories of Buddies you can share?

"We had a lot of fun. We worked hard and truly supported each other. We did feel like we were doing something important—and think we were. It was a wild ride. Never dull."

David Oiye, "ascending" on the Buddies cabaret stairs. Photo: R Kelly Clipperton.

Moynan King

Writer, performer and director Moynan King has been instrumental on stage and off at Buddies. The Artistic Director of Hardworkin' Homos, King's coordination on both the *Rhubarb! Festival* and *Hysteria: Festival of Women* are two examples of her generous contributions to Buddies. The beauty myth has played a prominent role in her works, including *Bathory*, *The Beauty Salon* and *The Importance of Being Beautiful*.

Of the million things you've done at (and in collaboration with) Buddies, of what are you most proud?

"For the past five years I have been developing a more experiential practice of live art installation that integrates the audience into the work. *The Beauty Salon* was a large scale culmination of this, blending musical theatre, interactive performance and visual art. The critics had no idea what to do with it, of course, so they ignored it. However by the end of its short (six day) run we were sold out and turning people away. I'm proud of it because it represents a truly unique form and speaks to the relevance of the live arts experience in an ever-increasing techno world. Secondly, as curator, I'm really proud of *Hysteria: A Festival of Women*. Founded by myself, and Kelly Thornton of Nightwood Theatre in 2003, and directed by myself from 2005 to 2009, the festival not only provided a forum for a diverse range of disciplines, styles and cultures from women's performance and art communities, but also acted as a symposium for women artists across Canada and abroad. *Hysteria* has been a site of exchange and creativity, inspiring audiences and providing an opportunity for hundreds of artists in a fun, playful, provocative environment."

You've seen Buddies transform throughout most of its history. How has it evolved, and what do you most hope for its future after three decades?

"Everything changes. Buddies changes from year to year and from show to show. Sky set a visionary precedent that made Buddies a place for a great many artists and artistic visions. I have always seen Buddies as this vibrant, sexy space of experimentation and innovation. My hope is that it will maintain its alternative status as a truly queer theatre. We live in strange and increasingly right wing times. The revision of queer identity to include, well, everyone, is a bit terrifying to me. Fuck post-queer (and fuck post-feminism too while we're at it!). We need to celebrate and examine our differences, claim our space and revel in the multifarious experience of queer identity. With the advent of gay marriage rights, there's this sense that we should just shut up now and blend in. We are in danger of becoming a mandated invisible minority required to "don't ask don't tell," as though there was nothing to tell. That's a dangerous concept to me."

Any favourite Buddies anecdotes you can share?

"I have the sweetest memory of being in the back of a U-Haul for the move of Buddies from George Street to Alexander Street in 1995 with Sky, Kirsten Johnson, Tim Jones, Patricia Wilson and a few others of the then, very small Buddies staff, along with all the worldly belongings of the company at that time, and Sky reciting the words to the poem *Buddies In Bad Times* by Jacques Prévert. I think we all felt like we were on the verge of something tremendous."

Having been *Rhubarb! Festival* organizer among other festivals, are you able to see how that festival has kick-started Canadian artists' careers over the years?

"*Rhubarb!* was for many years a venue for new, unproduced work where the reviewers were not allowed in. This created a safe space for experimentation and risk that resulted in the development of numerous, now established, Canadian artists and queer hybrid forms. Recently the festival has become more like the other theatre festivals in the city, a showcase for remounts of Canadian work—and this year, a lot of touring shows from New York. Sorry to be all anti-change but it was a special thing to have an established and respected (but protected) festival where the work had to be new. As for kick-starting careers, *Rhubarb!* is only a fraction of the total contribution Buddies has made to the theatre community of this country."

As a writer and director who often advocates for the presence of theatre by and about women, how do you feel lesbian material has been represented on the Canuck stage over 30 years, and is it still in its infancy for you?

"The performance work created by lesbians is some of the most exciting work in the country right now. It's testament to the indomitable spirit of the artist. We're developing new forms, exploring new venues and creating like demonesses (we could do a whole article on this, or even a book!). As for its representation on the stages of the established and funded companies that's a whole other thing. We don't have a space that we can claim really. At Buddies when I was there (1994-1997 under the artistic direction of Sky Gilbert and then again from 2003-2009) I made it my mandate to expand our network of female artists and develop female audiences. The artistic leaders while I was there were very supportive of women's work at Buddies and that's why so much has been done there, but the truth is in the long run we don't have any say in how things will go (for example I co-founded and curated a successful festival for women from 2003-09 and I have no idea, nor am I being consulted on, what is going to happen to it). As artists we are mature, sophisticated, resourceful and inspired, but sometimes within the established arts community, it seems we are treated like adolescents—we can do the work, as long as Daddy likes it and doesn't think it's disruptive in any way."

Outside of the arts what is your fantasy career, hidden in a parallel universe?

"Ornothologist. I love birds!"

> "The mandate for the original Buddies in Bad Times was to dramatize poetry onstage. The impetus was my dedication to French surrealist and beat poetry."
>
> ~ Sky Gilbert, *Ejaculations...*

Buddies' production of Sonja Mills' Dyke City: L to R, Moynan King, Sarah Stanley and Kathryn Haggis. Photo: Buddies' archives.

"I could understand that [Jean] Genet's queens were, in fact, rebelling against a whole society that supported the status quo, that drag undermines patriarchal power structures. At the time, I remember thinking that Toronto 'The Good' needed a kick in the ass—that it should have its own drag queen theatre."

~ Sky Gilbert, *Ejaculations...*

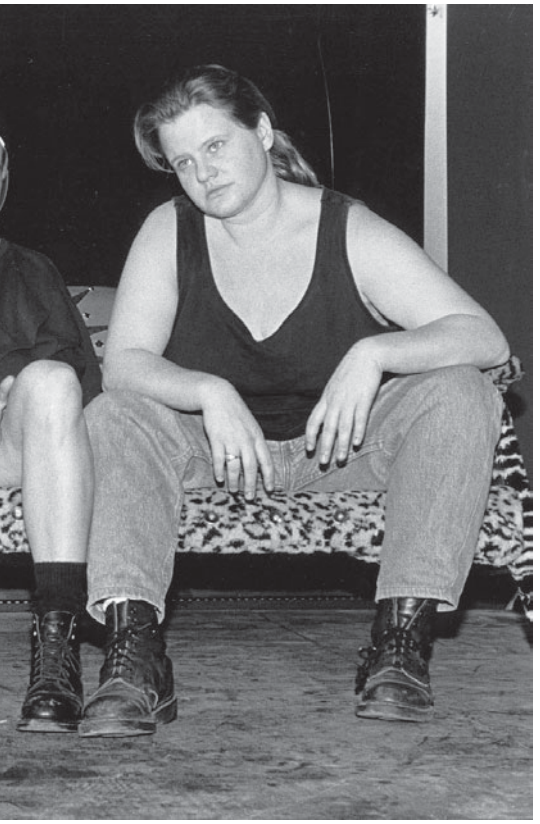
The infamous "Jane" photo at the steps of the Toronto Sun. Photo: Buddies' archives.

Sasha Van Bon Bon

The notorious and always hilarious Sasha Van Bon Bon is not only a celebrated syndicated sex columnist, but also burlesque performer, sex worker advocate and founder of The Scandelles alongside partner Kitty Neptune. The Scandelles' are one example of multidisciplinary companies on Buddies' stage in more recent years. **Thescandelles.com**.

Tell me about The Scandelles, and it's first production at Buddies.

"I am responsible for writing our productions while Kitty deals with choreography and direction. We both act in our productions. We began doing small burlesque shows at Buddies in 2001, just little midnight teasers to entertain the kids at the weekend dance party. I was always very interested in the Weimar Cabaret, with its strange and beautiful collision of weary, living-in-the-moment indefatigability as well as Dadaist cabaret—so purposeful and pretentious. Buddies seemed like the ideal place to explore this type of performance. We mounted our first large scale show there for *Hysteria* called *Under the Mink* which was a celebration of queer women and women that queers love in film. I had no idea that David Oiye was such a film buff but apparently he couldn't resist a show that paid tribute to Anna Karina, Theda Bara, Elizabeth Berkeley and all the women of noir cinema. They took it for a run and it took off."



In the context of "queer" performance, has the landscape changed drastically in the last decade at Buddies, in your opinion?

"I wasn't around Buddies much in the decades preceding the one where I became entrenched because I was in Montréal, but from my perspective the theatre changed greatly when Jim LeFrancois came along. Jim had a real rich and juicy vision. He wanted to make everyone he put on that stage a superstar. He brought back the outsider as the visionary thing that Andy Warhol had going. He was a sideshow barker, a tough, prissy faggot, a rabble rouser, a feminist."

If boundaries do exist that we have yet to push, what would they be?

"My goal as a theatre creator has always been to create a space where people see themselves and their feelings and lives represented through outsider/queer lives. We are often told that the crowds that attend our shows are not "Buddies crowds". Nothing pleases me more than people who are perceived to be mainstream/straight coming in and feeling connected to those who are perceived as outsiders, or at least knowing that they can't ignore our lives and the way we choose to live them (this particularly, when presenting material that deals with sex work). This connection is profoundly important in bridging communities and I will continue to push boundaries with this agenda in mind. I may have a bit of a snotty attitude towards the bourgeoisie, but ultimately I want all of us to get along. I want some lady from Forest Hill to walk out of a show and say, 'Sex workers have a place in the world. The next time I'm confronted with someone's negative attitude towards a whore I might have a few things to say.'"

What has been most important to you, in the context of how Buddies has supported you as an artist?

"Every single person at Buddies is there because they are completely committed to theatre and community and you feel that love and support at every step, whether you're walking in and saying hi to Chris at the box office, getting a drink from Patricia at the bar, having Erika write a bio or press release or working with the most monumentally talented and easygoing tech crew around. As queers, we may often find ourselves speaking very prosaically or vaguely about "community" but it exists in its most pure form at that theatre. Having that kind of support, not just as an artist but as a human being, makes you better. I am better for working there. I have also started working as a theatre technician at Buddies and have had the great privilege to work with some amazing artists and technicians. Learning about the theatre from the back end has been pivotal to my development as a theatre creator."

Any anecdote you can share from rehearsals?

"We have a lot of fun rehearsing in that space. Our shows seem to bring out the devil in the crew and cast. As a result of *Neon Nightz*, my partner Kitty is now teaching poledancing to several people at Buddies and they are all just fucking amazing. Scandelles' shows are also hotbeds for romance, it seems. Many people have met and fallen in lust or love on our productions. Let's just say the 'Don't Bang People You Work With' policy has proven rather futile in our company. Not that we would enforce it."

After three decades, what are your hopes for Buddies' future?

"That it remains a place where people feel both nurtured and challenged."

Sky Gilbert, amidst Buddies' Alexander Street renovations.
Photo: Buddies' archives.

"You see, when an artist writes from his or her "culture"—whether it's gay or straight, black or blue, Jewish or Arab—that position can have its advantages and disadvantages. But I think that anyone who openly talks about writing from a minority position is doing a brave thing." ~ Sky Gilbert, *Ejaculations...*

Evalyn Parry

Singer/songwriter, performer and co-founding Artistic Director of The Independent Aunties, Evalyn Parry has taken Buddies' Queer Youth Program to new heights over the last 5 years. Through the program, she's assisted Buddies with sheltering and nurturing the queer expression and creativity of today's up-and-coming artists, while providing audiences with some top notch entertainment in plays like *Clean Irene*, *Dirty Maxine* and *Breakfast*. Parry's music is available on iTunes and through Borealis Records. **Evalynparry.com**.

Having been heavily involved in Buddies' queer youth program, has it added to generating a new youth audience at Buddies more than in previous years?

"I like to think so—the youth program has certainly become a very active part of the theatre's activities; our monthly youth open mic regularly attracts between 60 and 100 people, and PrideCab, our year-end show regularly sells out the main space...we're definitely introducing new people."

How would you define the new generation of artists and audiences at Buddies, thinking of it in the context of previous years?

"Hot!! Increasingly hot!"

I've asked Moynan and Sarah this question too, but I always wonder if lesbian-themed work has been underrepresented in Canada in general. Do you feel it's grown up now on the Buddies stage, or that there are still some growing pains?

"I'd certainly say there is still LOTS of room to grow in this department—given the general statistics of how under-represented women still are in Canada as playwrights and directors, let alone lesbians...that being said, the last year and the coming year show a good representation on stage at Buddies, which is great to see...."

If you were to look ahead to Buddies 50th anniversary, what are your biggest hopes for the company?

"That it remains, and grows, as an internationally renowned hotbed for cutting edge, avant-garde, queer work—in all senses of that word (and I hope by the 50th anniversary that the theatre will have a dedicated rehearsal hall!)."

Daniel MacIvor

In the mid-1980s, Daniel MacIvor's earliest productions began at Buddies. Since then, the writer, performer, director and Da Da Kamera artist has had one of the most successful and influential careers in contemporary Canadian theatre, with an occasional nod to his Maritime roots both on stage and screen. He recently wrote and directed *Communion* at Tarragon Theatre, and steps back in his solo shoes this month for a new collaboration with Daniel Brooks. Entitled *This Is What Happens Next*, the Necessary Angel production continues at the Canadian Stage Company's Berkeley Street Theatre until May 8. **Danielmacivor.com**.

How is life after Da Da Kamera?

"Life is good. Part of closing DDK was to spend less time on the road but just this year I've worked in Vancouver, Halifax, New York, Banff and Tokyo and there are two more trips to Banff and another to Tokyo on the horizon. So much for home sweet home."

Buddies has been a home not only to some of your biggest hits, but a whole series devoted to it—can you tell me about the *Rhubarb! Festival* and those early experiences at Buddies?

"*Rhubarb!* was the best. It was the only game in town at the time for new alternative work at that level. We were not being considered for *Passe Muraille* or *Tarragon* or *Factory*—too young or too inexperienced or too strange—and there was no Fringe or Summerworks. Also at that time there was a limit of 30 minutes and there was no work being presented from out of the city. So what you had was this wonderful collection of short works that really reflected what was happening in Toronto. And it wasn't strictly experimental work. In one evening you saw five plays: week one's program, might be a highly sexualized Louis XIV satire directed by Peter Hinton, a feminist musical extravaganza by Diane Flacks, Victoria Ward and Wendy White, a comedy by Robin Fulford about a boy chained to a banister, a brilliant one-man show by Peter Lynch and a scary mind bending Hillar Liitoja experience. Those were the days. My first Buddies experience was Sky Gilbert giving me my first paycheck as a writer, to develop my baby of a play "*See Bob Run*." I can't thank Buddies enough for their support."

You once told me in an acting workshop that one of the keys to a successful performance is allowing yourself to fail on stage. Can you elaborate on that?

"One will never fly unless they step off the cliff. And if we hit the ground we clearly have some work to do on our wings. We'd never know that without the fall. Without the fall we'd just admire our wings in the mirror and envy those in the air."

I asked Bryden MacDonald this same question: As you and he are both successfully produced Nova Scotian writer/directors with a "queer" edge in some of your work, do you have any advice for other up and coming Maritime artists who are following that same path?

"Not just to Maritime artists—but all artists—I would say, understand that queerness is not something one wears, it's something one is. If you are queer it is part of what you do already, you don't have to work at making something "super queer" or "politically queer". If you're queer and you're making it and you're not hiding who you are, it's queer. Also, and I think this is especially true in the Maritimes where "in-you-face" work is seen as potentially show-offy and rude, I would encourage: charm them in the theatre, shock them in their dreams."

Any fun Buddies anecdotes you want to share?

"It was all fun. But I have lots of fond memories of (and on) Ken McDougall's red sofa that ended up in the old Buddies lobby."

If you were to look back on Buddies, how would you say it has played arole in your career, and how do you think it will best play a role in the future?

"Without Buddies I don't think I would be where I am. They were integral. In the future I hope they continue to become huge but always stay small enough to have a beautiful queer Canadian heart." O

We're listening to you! Since our debut of Canadian Trailblazers in December 2009, the feedback you've given us on the Trailblazers in your own communities has been pouring in. Keep it coming! ***OUTLOOKS*** wants to hear from you on the pioneers-to-be, hotshots, and superstars making a difference to Canada's LGBTQ communities. Send us an email to **trailblazers@outlooks.ca** with your selections and why you feel your Trailblazer is truly making a difference.

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~ BEN BENEDICT

HIV Vaccine Facility Cancelled

Harper abandon's Canada's leading role as HIV researcher in "policy" shift

In 2007, Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Bill Gates of Microsoft, through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, announced the Canadian HIV Vaccine Initiative (CHVI), with Canada committing up to $111 million, and the Gates Foundation providing up to $28 million. The project was to support "Canadian researchers and institutions to work with collaborators around the world, including in developing countries, on a range of HIV vaccine research activities, including: discovering new vaccine candidates; strengthening clinical trials capacity; manufacturing promising vaccine candidates for trials; and addressing policy, regulatory, and social issues related to HIV vaccine development," according to the original media release.

Fast forward to this, the first quarter of 2010, and that same Conservative government under Mr. Harper has not only cancelled this project in an announcement on February 19, but in April withdrew its financial support from the non-profit International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI.org) as well. This sudden reversal of support has Canadians, researchers and opposition members questioning the government on its rationale that not only abdicates Canada's role as world health leaders, but does so at the expense of our researchers and many of the world's most vulnerable.

That February announcement suggested that sufficient supply was available in North America, based on a study commissioned by the Gates Foundation, and that "None of the applicants were found to be successful in meeting the pre-established criteria."

In that suggestion, and upon further research, more questions are raised than answers are forthcoming, with a lot of "passing the buck" between agencies and none giving a clear response.

Don Gerson, president and CEO of PnuVax, Inc., on March 8, did a complete analysis of the Gates study, indicating in fact that "this study is fatally flawed by its failure to place priority on the quality aspects of clinical materials manufacturing."

The Oliver Wyman Inc. report, Supply and Demand for HIV vaccine clinical trial material: Summary of findings, completed over nine weeks and published in July, 2009, clearly states that "primary emphasis (is) on assessing physical capacity not quality of that capacity."

According to Mr. Gerson, "The history of this is that, five or six years ago, I was making many potential HIV vaccines from funding from the Gates Foundation. What was happening was that we couldn't find any facility where quality was not a concern rather than the technical concerns of the vaccine. Many could make something; but few could do it with the quality required. I wrote a report to the Gates Foundation and it resulted in the creation of the original project. The very first thing [Oliver Wyman] say is that they did not consider the quality, and that was the purpose of this proposal so that we could prove that the vaccine works on a quality basis."

This sudden reversal of support has Canadians, researchers and opposition members questioning the government on its rationale that not only abdicates Canada's role as world health leaders, but does so at the expense of our researchers and many of the world's most vulnerable.

While using a report that does not address the initial concern is troubling; equally troubling is what is not implicitly stated in that report.

"Oliver Wyman makes its money from consulting with Big Pharma, and that is the way they do business, as well as doing business for others. I would assume that they had done what was asked. I'd say they bluntly answered the question; so, who asked the question and why?" asks Gerson.

Then there's the very serious accusation implicit in the project's cancellation that none of Canada's leading HIV research facilities or teaching universities met the proposal requirements including long-term sustainability.

"What really upset me and others was that the Federal Government said that no one in Canada is competent to do the job," says Gerson. "It puts you in the situation of your mother's calling you an idiot in public. And after that, who will believe you're not? The Canadian Government has spent a lot of money on this, and they suddenly told everybody in the world that none of our people are any good. Then they backed up and said that none of the proposals are sustainable. And that, too, is wrong. Everybody is furious and disgusted in the way it operated and made its decision. The why is murky and it doesn't make good sense."

Dr. Ted Hewitt, Vice-President Research & International Relations, The University of Western Ontario, and one of the four project bidders, is equally unimpressed.

We had some in-depth conversations that the proposal had merit; but it wasn't satisfactory. There were a number of things they were looking at like sustainability and time lines. Over all, it felt like it wasn't on; so it didn't get the nod and neither did anyone else," says Hewitt. "We're disappointed; but we're a university with a lot of different initiatives, and we're going to put our energy into those projects."

One of those initiatives currently under way at Western in HIV research is that of Dr. Yong Kang's development of an HIV vaccine, at the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry at Western. It's licensed to Sumagen Canada Inc., and "has now been manufactured for use in trials—first, in toxicology trials, using animal models, and then in Phase 1 human clinical trials. Kang's vaccine uses a killed whole HIV-1, much like Jonas Salk's killed whole polio virus vaccine. The vaccine has been manufactured at a biosafety level 3 (BSL3) good manufacturing practice (GMP) facility in the United States," according to a Western News article of November 12, 2008.

"This is just one project that we applied to, and it has no other affect on the projects that we are doing, like Dr. Kang's. We're currently awaiting FDA [US Food and Drug Administration] approval for clinical trials in the United States. They're funded from different sources," says Hewitt adding, "The other concern was around the current need for the facility. The question is what do they mean by other facilities?"

What this proposal would have done for Canada is create a Level 5 facility, whereas Winnipeg-based International Centre for Infectious Diseases, one of the bidders, is a Level 4 facility currently. The Oliver Wyman report makes no mention of specific facilities.

"It puts you in the situation of your mother's calling you an idiot in public. And after that, who will believe you're not?"

"It puts in place a group know-how on handling these highly infectious diseases. And the Winnipeg proposal was to take that knowledge of those individuals and apply it to this vaccine," says Gerson. "I think another aspect is that this is a tragedy for Canada. It would have added capability that it didn't have and brought people from all over the world. Instead, they decimated what we had. The future of the world is in high tech and Canada just lost another opportunity to be a world leader."

While participants claim that homophobia played no part, the suggested loss of sovereignty in our decision-making process to large drug companies and abdication of our international role as leading researchers, is equally harmful. Liberal and NDP opposition members continue to question the government for rational answers.

Dr. Kirsty Duncan, Liberal MP Etobicoke North, on order paper Q-682 of March 3, 2010 asks 27 direct questions.

"We had so many questions and, since then, have a lot more. We have 60 million people worldwide affected by HIV. What I don't understand is that, two years into the process, they do due diligence and the report they claim to have ended the process disclaims on page one that they don't address the reason for the proposal in the first place. Why is this being cancelled? This is our greatest health threat. We have to understand how this happened and where the money will go. The disease does not discriminate," says Duncan. "Next week (April 12-16) we have two days with official witnesses on what happened with CHVI. When we called for that, we did not know about the IAVI fund cancellation. It was important for the world, and we lost it."

Judy Wasylycia-Leis, NDP MP Winnipeg North, has also remained vigilant in seeking answers.

"We have at least two days of hearings next week with the health committee, and that's a victory," says Wasylycia-Leis. "They're saying that the vaccine could be produced at a private clinic; but they're not necessarily going to invest in clinical trial processes and then take it to the next level. I'm very suspicious that there is a private for-profit group that will take on this project as it was envisioned."

As for a response to members of Canada's gay communities, "I think this latest development reflects the Conservative agenda on international issues, with a move away from Africa; and secondly, because of their refusal to accept the political priority of addressing the needs of the GLBT community. Every day, we see the removal of opportunities in relation to the GLBT community, including support and counselling services for those affected by HIV/AIDS—because they may feel that it's a GLBT issue even though Aboriginals are mostly affected currently. The most important thing is to keep the pressure on this government. We need to keep fighting and speaking up," says Wasylycia-Leis. O

For more information and ongoing updates visit the Canadian HIV Vaccine Initiative (CHVI) at **www.chvi-icvv.gc.ca**; Public Health Agency of Canada at **www.phac-aspc.gc.ca**; and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation at **www.gatesfoundation.org**.

Randall on the Road

Travel Editor Randall Shirley in Berlin, March 2010.
Photo: Denni Danieli-Polloni.

Volcanic Delights and Travel Insurance

Who knew a small hole in the earth could wreak such havoc? As I write this, thousands of travellers are stuck on both sides of the Atlantic. The grounding of so many flights in Europe is causing travel problems and affecting people literally around the globe.

From PBS, I learned the last time a volcano affected the world so broadly was in 1883, when the Indonesian island of Krakatoa veritably blew to pieces. The explosion was heard 5,000 miles away in Africa, and the ash cloud changed the colour of sunsets in California and even Europe.

One of my all-time favourite travel books, a children's book, is based on that explosion. *The Twenty-One Balloons* tells of an explorer, Professor Sherman, who attempts to escape normal life for a year by floating in a balloon. After a few weeks, things go wrong and he crashes on Krakatoa—a substantial "trip interruption," for which he has no insurance.

On Krakatoa he discovers a secret, fabulously rich society of 20 expat families. Because the island constantly shakes under their feet, they've prepared an elaborate, balloon-lifted platform for escape, should it ever be required. Eventually, of course, it is. Essentially, the platform is their "trip interruption insurance," something thousands of travellers are currently wishing they'd purchased.

It's doubtful that Iceland will repeat Krakatoa's monstrous explosion. But travellers are likely stranded in both of this issue's featured cities. If I were one of them, I'd do what professor Sherman did: get out of the airport and meet locals. You can explore Toronto's **Kensington Market** (page 40) or enjoy an extra performance of **Berlin Cabaret** (page 37). I'd tell the locals what was happening to me, hope for some hospitality, and maybe watch colourful sunsets. Hopefully, I'd have enough cash or credit available for a few extra days away.

But, I wouldn't likely have trip interruption insurance—I've always believed it is too expensive. The current situation is making me think about it, though. What do you think? Have you ever purchased trip interruption insurance? Would you?

Blog with me at **www.randallshirley.com/blog**.

Airline News

Continental Airlines: supports the community by becoming the only North American airline to sponsor the International Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (**iglcc.org**). They're also Star Alliance, so request Aeroplan points when you fly them!

WestJet: Now offering *scheduled* (vs. charter) service between Toronto and three destinations in Cuba.

Porter Airlines: New non-stop service between Sudbury, Ontario, and Toronto's City (island) Airport.

Photo: Courtesy Continental Airlines

Air Canada: Begins new non-stop service between Toronto and Orange County, CA; San Diego; Portland, Oregon; Memphis; Cincinnati; Portland, Maine; and Syracuse.

Mainstream TripAdvisor.co.uk names Europe's top gay-friendly hotels

1. Colson House, Brighton
2. Hotel Sejour Beaubourg, Paris
3. Hotel Axel, Barcelona
4. Hotel Ca' Dogaressa, Venice
5. Clarion Hotel Prague Old Town, Prague
6. Ty Rosa, Cardiff
7. Hotel Deutsche Eiche, Munich
8. The Golden Bear, Amsterdam
9. Los Almendros, Gran Canaria
10. Hotel Sachsenhof, Berlin

Cool New North American Hotels

North Vancouver, BC. Need to visit your aunt on the North Shore? With views of downtown Vancouver, an excellent pool/gym, plus un-touristy Lonsdale Quay Market just steps away, the spanky 'n' cool new Pinnacle at the Pier is a gay-friendly option. Fifteen leisurely minutes on the Seabus (ferry) takes you to downtown Vancouver. **Pinnaclehotelatthepier.com**.

Pittsburgh, PA. Canadian-owned Fairmont opens the *Queer as Folk* city's first luxury property by offering an introductory "It's a Date" package featuring deluxe accommodation and a $50 food and beverage credit. Available through June 30, 2010, rates for this offer start from $179 USD per night, based on double occupancy. **Fairmont.com**.

Photo: courtesy Fairmont Hotels

Got Passport Thoughts?

Here's a rare chance to tell a government agency what you think. Passport Canada is prepping to launch a new e-passport and make other changes, and is inviting public input. Tell 'em what you think by July 31, 2010 at **www.passportcanada.gc.ca/consultations**.

Essential Cliché:
Come to the CABARET

Berlin proves that everything old can be new again—even a clichéd, gay-important entertainment genre. ***Travel Editor Randall Shirley*** *tells why you should bliebe, reste, stay.*

~ RANDALL SHIRLEY

The Hostess with the Mostest. Emcee Meret Becker dazzles at Wintergarten Varieté.
Photo: courtesy Wintergarten.

You can come to Berlin for *anything*.

We have come to the cabaret.

My partner and I have obeyed Liza Minnelli. No, actually we've followed the lure of gay literary icon Christopher Isherwood.

Cabaret is a Berlin cliché that I can't resist. It's been nearly 65 years since Isherwood introduced us to Sally Bowles; almost 40 years since Liza won an Oscar for playing her, admonishing us to toss life's cares aside and come to Berlin's anything goes, hedonistic party scene. Amazingly, Berlin still has its own long-standing love affair with the genre we call cabaret—Berliners call it *varieté*.

"A toast to the Queen—if she had balls, she'd be King!" The crowd snickers, the emcee holding each of us perfectly in the palm of her hand, switching briefly from German to a joke in English. The show at Berlin's elegant Wintergarten does a bang-up job creating the atmosphere of Berlin in the 20s: an evening of old-fashioned variety. It's not as nasty, hedonistic, or politically-driven as we might hope. All those elements do exist in other venues, but you'd need to speak German to really experience them. Our evening of *varieté* may not be nasty, but it is rich.

Insanely talented emcee, Meret Becker, doesn't attempt to channel Joel Grey or Alan Cumming—the sell-out, mostly German crowd, isn't here for that. Instead she tells her own jokes and sings her own songs in German, with occasional English tidbits to satisfy non-German guests.

True to the genre, the emcee introduces us to a zany and crazy-talented cast of acrobats, singers, jugglers, even a French magician. Aside from seeing a full tango performed aerially on a trapeze, most of the acts aren't new—many of us have seen duos of muscular strongmen hold each other in impossible positions, and other cirque-style acts—but the presentation is fresh.

The crowd drinks, eats (a full dinner menu is offered), laughs, relaxes. Late in the show, the emcee melts us with a sultry *La Vie en Rose*, accompanied by a man playing crystal glasses, and her encore gives us *Cabaret* tune *Mein Herr*—a perfect send-off into the Berlin night.

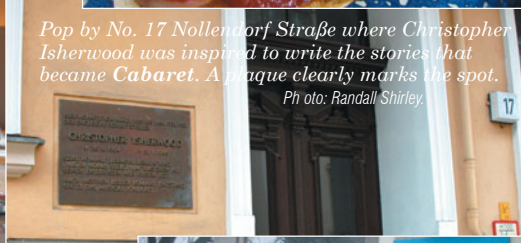
Wintergarten Theatre is near the Schöneberg neighbourhood—Berlin's gay heart since the 1920s, and the place to see the building at Nollendorf Straße No. 17, where Isherwood lived. A plaque marks the spot, giving nod to both the author and *Cabaret*, but the apartments are private.

That doesn't mean that you can't stay in a place that evokes his era. A few blocks west, we check in at Hotel Askanischer Hof. Passing through a grand marble entryway and climbing a curving flight of stairs, we enter a time warp. It's essentially an old rooming house surrounding a courtyard, with a front desk where matter-of-fact staff provides clunky, old-fashioned room keys. Finding our room requires navigating a maze of hallways—walls dotted with deco-era sketches—passing one large breakfast parlour and several smaller sitting rooms. Our room has far more than "one narrow bed"—indeed, it's got loads of space, 15-foot ceilings, a crystal chandelier, and two beds which become a king (typical in Germany).

Book ahead, then pick up your tickets at the Wintergarten box office. Photo: Randall Shirley.

Berlin's classic "fast food," currywurst and frites, plus a bowl of sausage/potato soup make the perfect lunch at Winterfeldtmarkt. Photo: Randall Shirley.

Ackselhaus/Blue House is a stunner. Photo: Randall Shirley.


Pop by No. 17 Nollendorf Straße where Christopher Isherwood was inspired to write the stories that became ***Cabaret****. A plaque clearly marks the spot.* Photo: Randall Shirley.

Want to feel like Isherwood? Check into Hotel Askanischer Hof, which is decidely, and delightfully, in a time-warp. Photo: Randall Shirley.

You can shop for leather and lederhosen in Berlin's Schöneberg gay neighbourhood. Photo: Randall Shirley.

I ignore the modern ensuite bath, the TV and free WiFi; for a moment it is 1931 and we are Isherwood's gay characters Peter & Otto, checking into a Berlin boarding house.

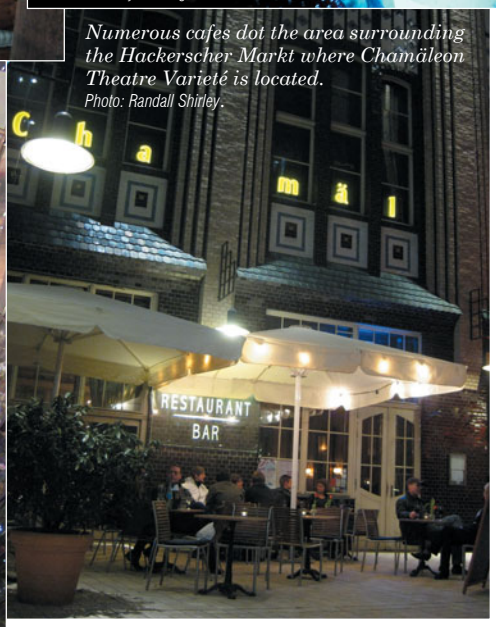
For a perfect Saturday, we wander surrounding streets of the former West Berlin, exploring a shrine to history—the sobering shell of Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church, bombed during WWII—and a shrine to German resilience and capitalism: the KaDeWe department store, which features an entire floor of globally imported foods, and a seventh-floor buffet with sublime views of the city through a massive arc of glass. We stroll the streets of the Schöneberg gay village, and discover a shop specializing in two types of classic German leather: lederhosen and military. At nearby Winterfeldtmarkt, a weekly outdoor market, we join hundreds of Berliners browsing an astonishing variety of breads, cheeses, produce (Herr Schulz' fruit stand comes to mind), art, clothing, and prepared foods. A late lunch of Berlin's classic fast-food "currywurst and frites" with a hearty bowl of sausage and potato soup makes the day perfection.

Ackselhaus/Blue House in one of the city's trendiest areas: the old East Berlin. Photo: courtesy Ackselhaus Hotel.

***Cabaret**, which Berliners call "varieté," sometimes includes bizarre characters.*

Photo: courtesy Wintergarten Theatre.

Funky modern architecture—in this case an inverted glass cone in Galeries Lafayette department store—is just one cool aspect of the old East Berlin. Photo: Denni Danieli-Polloni.



Numerous cafes dot the area surrounding the Hackerscher Markt where Chamäleon Theatre Varieté is located.
Photo: Randall Shirley.

East Berlin and the *Mitte* area, we're told, will feel different. It does. In the 20 years since the fall of the Wall, developers moved in, bulldozed many crummy Communist era buildings, gobbled up vacant land around the Wall, and created a new, slick, flashy side of Berlin. Today it's among Berlin's most expensive, and, of course, gay-popular, areas. New blends with old—architectural treasures, including the German State Opera, still line a road called *Unter den Linden*.

The cabaret genre remains on my mind, and we find another, newer form of *varieté* at the unique Chamäleon Theatre, located in a funky micro-neighbourhood called Hackescher Markt. The experience is 180° different from the Wintergarten. There is no emcee, no singers. Small tables surround a stage, and for two hours, we are dazzled by acrobatic dancing, by a troupe that tells stories of gender differences and relationships through choreography. The show is appropriately called *Versus*—females always "fly" onto the stage from the air, males enter from the ground. It is a breathtaking, dramatic rethinking of storytelling and the concept of *varieté*, scheduled to run through the summer.

To take full advantage of the Mitte area—filled with museums, remnants of the Wall, a stunning Holocaust memorial, funky shopping—we change hotels. Our new digs, Ackselhaus/Blue House, are as unique as our previous. It's easy to imagine being a foreign writer in 2010, checking into our modern-chic guest room and using it as a base to explore the city for a few months. Fittingly, it's a blend of new and old: a 19th-Century building overhauled into a contemporary feel. Heavy crown moulding surrounds 15-foot ceilings which are sanded to show generations of old paint, while, at eye level, it's fresh and clean. From our balcony, we have a view of the Jetson-era *Fernsehturm* tower. Downstairs, we're served the finest breakfasts of an entire two-week European trip. Starting around $175, these are not accommodations a hungry young writer could afford for long; but they are perfect for a gay couple to stay a few days and explore the drama of this city.

Lifting off from Tegel airport, bound for Canada, we look down at Berlin from the Lufthansa 737 window. Over the roar of the jet engines, we can still hear the music play. We've been to the cabaret. And we'll be back for an encore. O

The Details

Get There:

- From Canada, reaching Berlin requires at least one stop—with Air Canada it will be Frankfurt, with Star Alliance service continuing on Lufthansa. U.S. and international carriers may offer better pricing, as may flying outside the summer season. Attention West Coast readers: Star Alliance member US Airways from Seattle saved us nearly half the price of flying from YVR, and we still received our Aeroplan points.

Stay:

- Hotel Askanischer Hof, Kurfürstendamm 53, tel. +49 30 881 80 33, **www.askanischer-hof.de**
- Ackselhaus/Blue House, Belforter Straße 21, tel. + 49 30 44 33 76 33, **www.ackselhaus.de**
- If you need to stay in the heart of the Schöneberg gay village, try Axel Hotel (**www.axelhotels.com/berlin/**) or Tom's Hotel (**www.toms-hotel.de**).

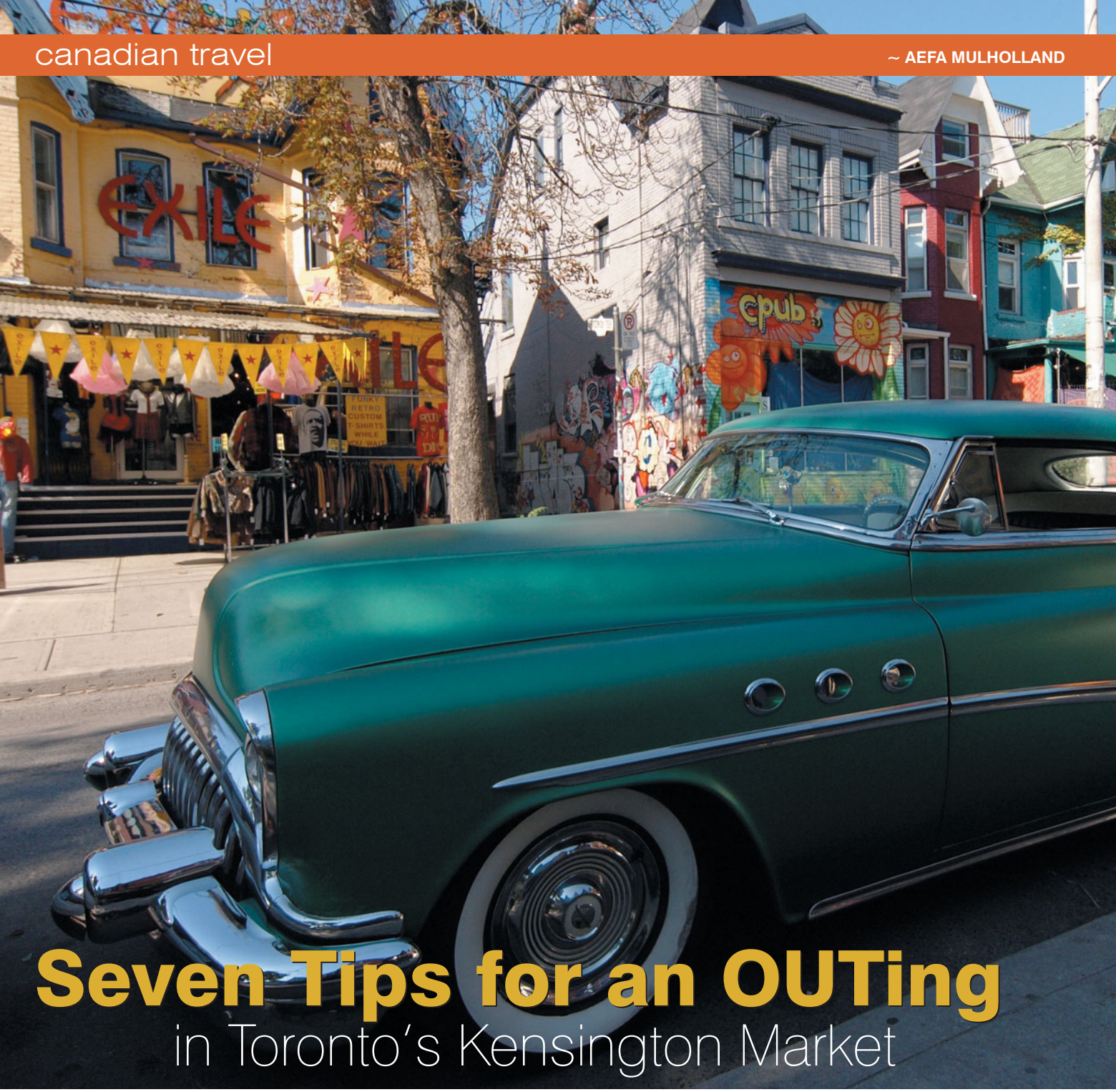
Eat:

- KaDeWe Buffet and International Food Floor, 7th Floor, Tauentzien Straße 21-24, **www.kadewe.de**
- Imbiss Currywurst & Frite Stand, Winterfeldtmarkt. Winterfeldtplatz, Schöneberg, **http://winterfeldtplatz.corbida.de/**

Play:

- General info (look for the gay page under "Berlin for...) **www.visitberlin.de**
- Wintergarten Varieté, Potsdamer 96, tel. +49 30 588 43 40, **www.wintergarten-variete.de**
- Chamäleon Theatre Varieté, Rosenthaler Straße 40/41, tel. +49 30 4000 59 30, **www.chamaeleonberlin.de**
- Berlin Gay (Schwules) Museum, Mehringdamm 61, tel. +49 30 69 59 90 50, **www.schwulesmuseum.de**
- Excellent gay custom tour guide, Markus Müller-Tenckhoff, **mmt-berlin@t-online.de**

~ AEFA MULHOLLAND



Seven Tips for an OUTing
in Toronto's Kensington Market

*If you thought Toronto's gay bookstore had closed its doors, **Aefa Mulholland** helps you find its new location—and so much more!*

Want to soak up Toronto's true character? Head to Kensington Market. The market offers a stimulating and compact take on Toronto's multiculturalism. It's a place where pieces of a hundred different cultures manage to fit together, creating one big jigsaw puzzle-including our culture. With a captivating cacophony of sights fighting for attention, you might not see it at first; but there are plenty of pink and rainbow pieces in this puzzle.

Gay-popular Kensington Market neighbourhood is decidedly counter-culture to Toronto's image as a buttoned-up buisness centre.
Photo: Tourism Toronto, www.SeeTorontoNow.com

While it's called a "market," it's really more of a neighbourhood, designated a National Historic Site of Canada. Kensington Market started life as a Victorian English and Irish working class neighbourhood, segued into a Jewish market area. It has become a vibrant mélange of Portuguese, Jewish, Afro-Caribbean, Chinese, East Indian, South Asian, Latin American and African businesses.

Toronto and Kensington Market are both amazingly diverse. And around the market's main drag—Augusta Avenue—you can *taste* it: from new age health food to delicious, artery-attacking churros. I've been tempted by freshly ground coffee and Mexican walnuts on Baldwin Street; by Portuguese butter tarts on Kensington Avenue; and by the smell of fresh fried pupusas in the air outside tiny, cluttered Perola's Supermarket on Augusta. Everywhere I turned, market stores groaned with Ontario fiddlehead greens, white asparagus, pomegranates and figs.

You can *hear* the market's diversity, too. Music blares from doorways. As I passed El Gordo Fine Foods, a chorus of mariachi horns did an unlikely riff into AC/DC's Back in Black. On the corner of Kensington and Baldwin, reggae fought it out with top 40 tracks.

Here are seven things to make your Kensington Market for a great Kensington Market OUTing!

1. DO A TITLE SEARCH

My first market stop is always the same—a visit to LGBT-hued bookstore, **This Ain't The Rosedale Library** (86 Nassau St., **thisaint.ca**). This former Gay Village stalwart upped anchor and moved here in May, 2008. Shelves are crammed with small press creations, 'zines, magazines from *Bitch and Bust* to the *Advocate* and carefully chosen titles from fiction to sustainability, politics, poetry and art. Pick up the latest by queer and straight authors, or find tickets for local homo events or feminist book readings.

Armed with some reading material, perhaps Canadian design bible, *Coupe*, saunter next door into **I Deal Coffee**, where the brews are classified as environmentally, socially, politically and/or economically sustainable. They also have a tea menu that offers options including "Beautiful Foolishness" and "One Love, One Heart." Two-seater vinyl diner seats are crowded in alongside sacks of coffee beans, milk crates and random jumble. If it's roasting day, the smell of toasting beans lingers over the street. The shared bookstore-coffeehouse patio is a perfect perch for watching the world—and the stream of readers—go by.

2. WHAT HAPPENS OVER THE RAINBOW

Post-caffeine, trot over to **Blue Banana** (250 Augusta Ave., **bluebananamarket.com**). Treat yourself to a fridge magnet stating, "What Happens Over the Rainbow, Stays Over the Rainbow," or a vintage RCMP bag for the men in your life with Mountie fetishes. For retro hipster and nouveau indie threads, sidle across to **Bungalow** (273 Augusta Ave., **bungalow.to**), or to **Model Citizen** (279 Augusta Ave.), where butch bois stock up on jackets and crafty girls troop in droves for Silkscreen 101 workshops. Round the corner, pick up some funky shades in **Butterfly** (42 Kensington Ave.); contemplate cashmere and corsages at venerable **Courage My Love** (14 Kensington Ave.); get ideas for your next costume party at **Exile** (22 Kensington Ave., **exilevintage.com**); and rummage through vintage Americana at **Flashback 2** (25 Kensington Ave.).

After hanging out in gay-popular Kensington Market, fashion finds from a variety of eras might fill your luggage for the trip home.
Photo: Tourism Toronto, www.SeeTorontoNow.com

It's all a bit funky in Toronto's gay-popular Kensington Market.

3. ACE OF BASS

Market art tends to be of the street variety—graffiti and cool stencils appear on walls and doorways all around. But I'd heard of a more permanent art installation, so headed to Bellevue Square Park, following Toronto resident Maggie McLean's instructions to "make for the street light pole, look round the back and be prepared to be surprised." Take her advice, and now mine! Try not to be self-conscious, peer around the pole and be surprised, indeed. In a cool twist of guerilla art, the pole has been adapted into an upright bass. You can even tune it up, put your ear to the metal and hear it reverberate inside. It's definitely in tune with market politics.

4. BREWING UP A MUSICAL STORM

Needing another shot of caffeine? On Augusta, the smooth sounds of jazz percolate out of **The Sublime Café** (219 Augusta Ave., **thesublimecafe.com**), where vinyl lives on. A jazz café and record store, this palace of percolation offers WiFi, the best espresso in the market, and a thoughtful jazz selection.

5. DINE THE MARKET

When you need a nosh, trot into **Lucero Lopez's El Trompo** (277 Augusta Ave., **eltrompo.ca**) for an appetizer. At this tasty taqueria, rainbow-coloured walls backdrop folk art and Mexico City-style tacos al pastor. Next stop: **Burger Bar** (319 Augusta Ave., **ricebar.ca**). Like pretty much all-things market, Burger Bar is funky and laid-back. This bar doubles as a tequila tavern, and the brunch and dinner menus are Southwest-meets-Midwest with a Canadian twist. (My Cowboy's Supper of rice, beans and eggs was covered in tangy tomatillo salsa, and my server was gorgeous.)

6. SEE THE AMBASSADOR

Tucked in a nook beside Sublime Cafe, the **Embassy** (223 Augusta Ave.) is an easy-going saloon, popular with residents on a weeknight. It's a good place for a low-key date. While music of groups like The Smiths plays, Ontario and Quebec microbrews flow. I spotted two girls on, what looked like a first date, smirking shyly at each other across the next table. That could be you.

7. DON'T MISS THE BOAT

There's no *permanent* homo hotspot in Kensington; but there are two venues that play host to big gay crowds. The kooky **Boat** (158 Augusta Ave.), a 70's era Portuguese seafood restaurant with a faded nautical theme, perched atop a hardware store, is home to gay-popular, 50s-themed Goin' Steady dance parties and moonlights as a venue for events such as 2008's Ladyfest Toronto. The last of the trio is the **Augusta House** (152a Augusta Ave.), a second-floor saloon where indie parties star. Among the smorgasbord of eclectic nights are gay boy-popular Thursday night dance parties. O

Get There:

- Kensington Market is best navigated on foot. Take TTC's Spadina streetcar to Baldwin and walk one block west, or the College car to Augusta and head south, or the Dundas car to Augusta and walk north. If you must drive, there's a parking lot on College, just west of Spadina. The last Sunday of the month in summer is pedestrian-only. *Much of the market is closed on Mondays.*

Travel & Accommodation

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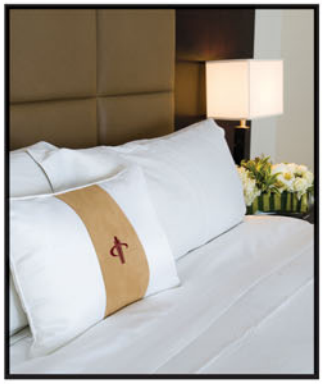

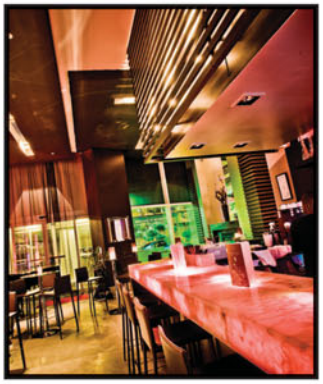

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Planet Out's FIVE PALMS AWARD

Where's YOUR Favourite Gay Destination?

Don't forget to tell us about your favourite gay travel destinations in the 50 Gayest Places survey—the results of this unique survey will be released next December in *OUTLOOKS*' double edition. You'll see this graphic at **www.outlooks.ca**. Click it to go to the survey.

50 GAYEST travel destinations experiences

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How to Retire Overseas

by Kathleen Peddicord © 2010, Hudson Street Press

This morning was different.

This morning—like nearly every morning for the past several decades—you rolled over, slapped the alarm and thought about your day ahead, hoping for a little free time; but knowing that was probably impossible, just like it has been for years.

And that's what made this morning different. This morning, you knew you were done. You can't stand it anymore. You want out, desperately.

Travel posters have caught your eye lately, and so have touristy TV commercials. But that kind of life is only for dreamers, isn't it?

Not always, says Kathleen Peddicord. In her new book, "How to Retire Overseas," you'll find out how easy it is to spend the rest of your days out-of-country.

So you think a life of leisure is the life for you. You've harboured a childhood dream of living in South America, Paris, the Orient. You've always wanted to see the world. But, before you go, there are a few steps you can take at home to make the dream a reality and the transition smoother.

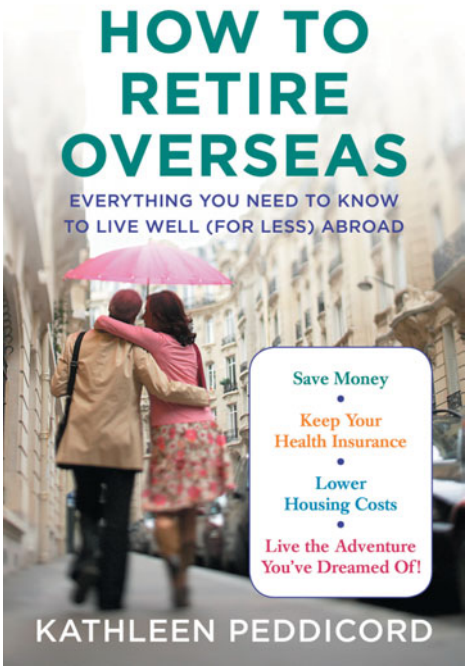
First of all, says Peddicord, know yourself. Are you an impatient sort? Can you remain calm if the electricity fails or you can't get online? Is your health relatively good? Can you stand to be away from the kids and grandkids? What kind of climate do you enjoy? Do you speak a second language?

Next, decide what you can afford, what you can't live without, and how you'll manage your money. Many countries "roll out the red carpet" for retirees, and that can make life abroad surprisingly budget-friendly. Know your options before you go, though, and that includes taxes. As a resident of another country, you may need to pay taxes in both countries. Peddicord recommends hiring a top-notch attorney with experience in international tax issues.

Decide if you want to rent or buy a home, understand the monetary differences for both, and know that the real estate market in other countries is very different than what you're used to here. Check into the cost of utilities, and call your local cell phone provider to see what international coverage they offer. Research residency options, visas, and necessary paperwork. Sign up for international health care. Store your stuff. Pack. Go.

Before I started reading "*How to Retire Overseas*," I was dreaming of white beaches and haciendas. One of the curious things about this book, though, is that it might talk you out of retiring abroad just as much as it might convince you.

Author, Kathleen Peddicord, who lives abroad with her family, leaves only a few foreign stones unturned in this book, giving readers step-by-step pointers as well as insights to several travel-tested locales that are retiree-friendly. That's helpful, as are the challenges and pitfalls she honestly includes toward the back of this enticing book.



If you're done hitting the alarm clock and you're thinking of throwing a dart at a map instead, stop first and read this. "*How to Retire Overseas*" could lend a refreshingly different look at your future.

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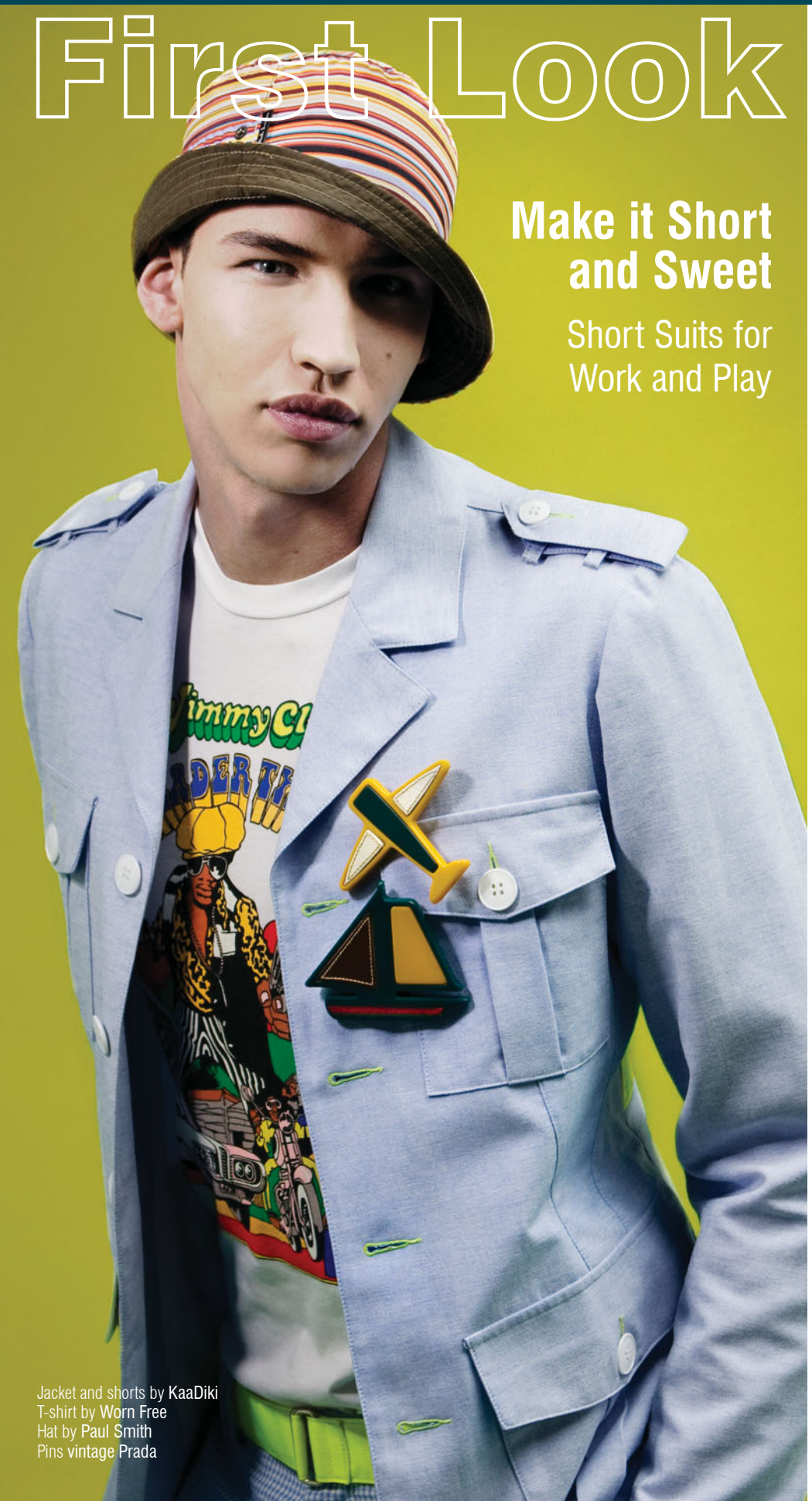
First Look

Make it Short and Sweet

Short Suits for Work and Play



Jacket and shorts by KaaDiki
T-shirt by Worn Free
Hat by Paul Smith
Pins vintage Prada

~ LINCOLN PHILLIP

Rainbow Lover

Spring fever is evolving into summer heat, and we want our fashion fix now! In this issue we went all the way to inspire you with this season's hottest looks, by asking photographic duo Wilkosz + Way to capture, with their creative eyes, the amusing mood of summer in bold colours, which they brought into light with a kaleidoscope of fun fashion snaps.

Our cover boy Dan R. was a great sport on set as he contorted his wiry frame into some uncompromising positions to fulfil our vibrant vision.

Summer 2010 is all about taking classic looks and updating them with a fresh approach. Layering in light fabrics is a great way to explore your creativity with this season's hot hues; but do you remember your art class colour theory? Knowing the colour wheel is key when attempting to mix and match bold shades. Just go sparingly on iconic matches like red and green or yellow and purple. Use non-colours such as black, white and neutrals to ground the colours and, at the same time, make them pop. Don't be afraid to break some of the rules like pairing pink with red (we've all worn grey and black or baby blue with denim). Gradation is a good thing.

To beat the heat, short pants are cropping up in various lengths from knee-grazing to thigh-high. Go ahead and take the shortcut with your suits. Instead of long pants, why not reveal those knees; but be sure to finish the look with a graphic-print sock and fancy footwear such as the desert boot, driving moccasin or chukka boot. Save the sandals for the weekends.

And what better way to spruce up your Saturday nights than with a bow tie? Being a randy dandy is very becoming and a great alternative to the usual jeans and t-shirt club gear. Check out Mister Bowtie (**misterbowtie.com**) for some suave ideas.

But, no matter how you fulfill your fashion needs, just remember to do it in style.

BOLD Moves

Set the Tone with a Colourful Statement

Photographed by Wilkosz + Way
Fashion Direction by Len Mastaler
Styling by Lincoln Phillip

Bowtie by **Mister Bowtie**
Jacket by **Boss Orange**
Shirt by **Adidas® by KZK**
Shorts by **Modern Amusement**
Pocket square by **Etro**
Belt stylist's own

Jacket by **Burkman Bros.**
Shirt and shorts by **J. Lindeberg**
Bowtie by **Mister Bowtie**
Sunglasses by **Ray Ban**
Belt by **Paul Smith**
Bag by **Gucci**
Socks by **Happy Socks**
Shoes by **Band of Outsiders for Sperry Top-Sider**

Update a Cool Classic

Polo shirt, varsity jacket, jeans, belt, bag and shoes all by **Lacoste**

Polo shirts in graphic prints make a stronger statement

Polo shirt, sweater, shorts
and sandals all by **Lacoste**

Bare your limbs in short shorts

Hooded t-shirt by **Kai-aakmann**
Tank top by **American Apparel**
Shorts by **Cheap Monday**
Bracelets by **Miansai**
Scarf by **Buddhist Punk**
Necklace stylist's own

Model Dan R @ I Model Management
Hair and Makeup by Alicja Wilkosz
All clothing courtesy of:
Gravity Pope [Band of Outsiders for Sperry Top-Sider, Happy Socks, and Opening Ceremony] (gravitypope.com)
Henry [Adidas® by KZK, Boss Orange, Happy Socks, and Ray Ban] (thinkhenry.com)
Holt Renfrew [Artango, Etro, Gucci, Happy Socks, Miansai, Modern Amusement, Paul Smith and Worn Free] (holtrenfrew.com)
KaaDiki (kaadiki.com)
Lacoste (lacoste.com)
Leo Boutique [Buddhist Punk, Cheap Monday, J. Lindeberg, and Kai-aakmann] (leoboutique.com)
Mister Bowtie (misterbowtie.com)

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inside out

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~ PERRY MAH

OUTLOOKS
Live from the 21st Annual GLAAD Media Awards

The highest of honours were presented again this year by the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, recognizing those in mainstream media who raise continued awareness, and support a positive representation of LGBT people. The Media Awards, held annually by GLAAD, have celebrated such individuals since 1990, and continue to shine a deserving spotlight on some of the best in the entertainment and media industry.

Taking place this year at separate events in New York, Los Angeles, and upcoming in San Francisco, accolades have been presented to a variety of celebrity figures, ranging from Sigourney Weaver to RuPaul.

Awards were bestowed in New York at the Marriott Marquis on March 13, as Joy Behar, receiving the Excellence in Media Award, and Cynthia Nixon, the recipient of the Vito Russo Award, were named the evening's top honourees.

OUTLOOKS was live on the Red Carpet and attending the Los Angeles event, held this year at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza on April 17.

Hollywood's gay elite and LGBT allies gathered to praise the best in film, television and journalism. The contemporary glamour and style of the Hyatt provided a luxurious backdrop to the star-studded event, as fan favourites made their way along the throng of media waiting to greet them and into the Hotel's Grand Los Angeles Ballroom. Lucky onlookers were treated to a glimpse of personalities like Eric Dane (*Grey's Anatomy*), George Takei, Benjamin Bratt, RuPaul, Olympic figure skater Johnny Weir, the cast of *Glee*, and Adam Lambert.

The hosts for the evening were the sultry actress Candis Cayne and the talented actor Wilson Cruz, playing off one another through a cheeky song and dance opening number for the capacity audience. Special honours went to Drew Barrymore and Wanda Sykes, both for their tireless work in increasing the visibility and understanding of the LGBT community in the media, and for showing a strong commitment to educating the public about the lives of LGBT people.

Barrymore, a long-time supporter of gay rights and full marriage equality, was presented with the Vanguard Award, and took the time to reflect on how she defined family. "The thing that means the most to me about an evening like this, and why I want to fight and be outspoken, is because there are so many people who are in desperate need of family," said Barrymore. "So, I'm honoured to be here this evening, because this is a family."

Stand-up comedian and actress Wanda Sykes was in rare form as she accepted the Stephen F. Kolzak Award. "It's very important, and I know you were joking when you said that, at 40 years old, coming out doesn't mean anything. Well I would like to introduce you to my mother. She would tell you really, it's a big effin deal!" laughed Sykes. "I am very humbled, thank you GLAAD," Sykes continued. "Thank you for the work you're doing and for being the watchdog; because you really create the environment to allow me to be comfortable to be me."

FOX's *Glee* was also a winner, taking home the award for Outstanding Comedy Series. Creator Ryan Murphy took the opportunity to thank the two out members of the cast, Jane Lynch and Chris Colfer, for staying true to themselves. To the role that the show plays to LGBT youth, Murphy states, "We have a great responsibility with the show. It is about arts education and more than that, it is about education, it is about inclusion," adding that Colfer's character, Kurt Hummel, will never be portrayed as a victim.

*Top to bottom: Cory Monteith (*Glee*) and Perry Mah, GLAAD President Jarrett Barrios, host Candis Cayne, host Wilson Cruz* - *Photos: © 2010 Perry Mah.*

Left to right: Wanda Sykes - Photo: © 2010 Perry Mah. *Drew Barrymore* - Photo: © 2010 Michael Caulfield/WireImage.
The cast of Glee *(l-r: Jane Lynch, Dianna Agron, Jenna Ushkowitz, Chris Colfer, series creator Ryan Murphy, Amber Riley, Cory Monteith, Kevin McHale, Jessalyn Gilsig)* - Photo: © 2010 Chris Weeks/WireImage.

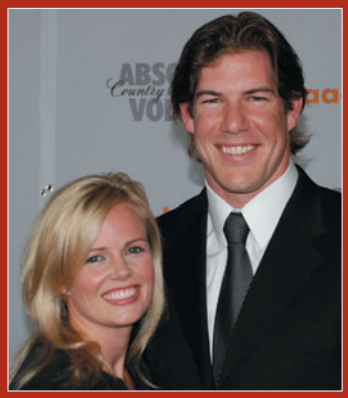
RuPaul's *Drag Race* was awarded for Outstanding Reality Program, and he seemed amused and pleased with the show's success. "I've been in show business for about 28 years now, and a few short years ago, I couldn't even get arrested in this town," commented RuPaul, tongue firmly in cheek.

The Telemundo program *Noticiero Telemundo* received the award for Outstanding Spanish Language TV Journalism segment for "Polémicas Adopciones"; while the movie, *A Single Man*, directed by Tom Ford, rounded out the winners, picking up the award for Outstanding Film-Wide Release.

The evening was capped off by a special performance by GLAAD nominee for Outstanding Music Artist, Adam Lambert, performing "Music Again" and "Fever" with the high energy theatrics and vocals that have become his signature.

The Celebrity After Party allowed the recipients to kick back and let down their well-coiffed hair. With The Perry Twins DJ'ing, bringing their energetic mixes to the dance floor, a couple of new Lexus models on site for those in the mood to window shop for a new car, and libations aplenty, the celebratory atmosphere was pure Hollywood at its best.

Additional Awards will be announced during the San Francisco event on June 5. For more information, please visit **www.glaad.org**. O



First row (l-r): Adam Lambert - Photo: © 2010 Perry Mah. *Sofia Vergara (*ABC's Modern Family*)* - Photo: © 2010 Jeffrey Mayer/WireImage. *Scott Fujita and wife (*New Orleans Saints linebacker*)* - Photo: © 2010 Perry Mah. *Second row (l-r): Scott Herman (*The Real World:Brooklyn*) - Celebrity After Party* - Photo: © 2010 Perry Mah. *Benjamin Bratt* - Photo: © 2010 Jeffrey Mayer/WireImage. *Countess LuAnne de Lesseps (*Real Housewives of New York City*)* - Photo: © 2010 Perry Mah.

*Left to right: Jason Lewis (*Sex and the City*)* - Photo: © 2010 Perry Mah. *Chaz Bono* - Photo: © 2010 Perry Mah. *Chris Salvatore star of (*Eating Out 3*)* - Photo: © 2010 Perry Mah. *Holly Robinson Peete (*The Celebrity Apprentice*)* - Photo: © 2010 Jeffrey Mayer/WireImage. *Johnny Weir (*Olympic figure skater*)* - IPhoto: © 2010 Perry Mah. *RuPaul* - Photo: © 2010 Chris Weeks/WireImage.

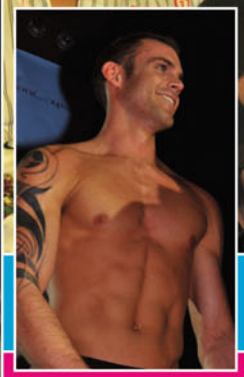
VANCOUVER Out & about

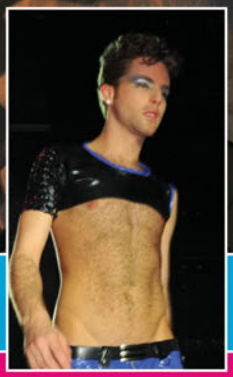
Rousseau Final Tour
March 24 at PumpJack

Don, Bernard Rousseau (retired owner of Priape), and Jim Deva (owner of Little Sisters)

Gay Top Model 2010
April 1 at Celebrities

Three winners Aaron, Fraser & Calan





Planning an event in Vancouver? Contact Barry at 604.685.1377 and he'll see about covering it in Out & About. Photos by: Barry Piersdorff

Out & about MONTREAL

Bal en Blanc
March 23 at Palais des congrès

Photos: Erick Contreras

Cesar Bass Romero

Infected Mushroom

CALGARY Out & about

AIDS Calgary Open House
April 21

Bernard Rousseau's Farewell Tour
March 26

Richard, Bernard Rousseau (founder of Priape) & Grant

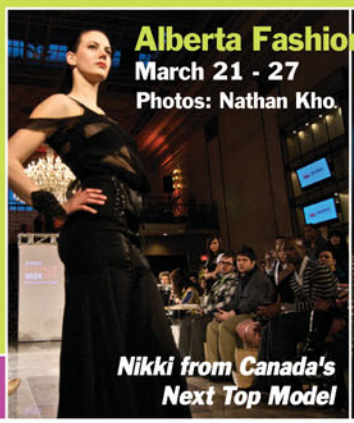
Western Cup Dance
April 3 at The Westin

Malibu Stacy, Michael, Nina Tron & Fred

Coronation 34
April 17 at The Westin
Photos: Linda Huston Eckess

Joey, Marta & Marina

Jeffery Straker Tour April 7 at The Marquee Room



Alberta Fashion Week 2010
March 21 - 27
Photos: Nathan Kho

Nikki from Canada's Next Top Model

ARGRA Uniform Dance
April 10

Forum on GLBT Violence -Calgary Police Services March 25

Planning an event in Calgary? Contact Perry at pmah@outlooks.ca and he'll see about covering it in Out & About.

Out & about EDMONTON

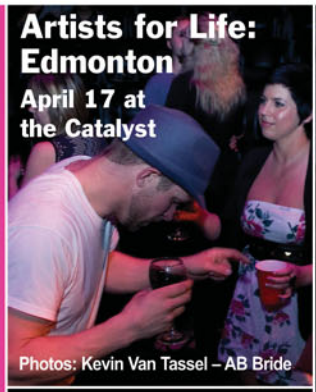
Planning an event in Edmonton? Contact jackson@jacksonphotografix.com and he'll see about covering it in Out & About. Photos by: jacksonphotografix

Miss Bailey's Pageant at Play

Morah VaMann

Myranda Rites

BEEF at Boots



Artists for Life: Edmonton
April 17 at the Catalyst
Photos: Kevin Van Tassel – AB Bride

Cast of 'Addition'

David Maurio

Michael Phair and Dr. Larry Jewell, founding fathers of HIV Edmonton

TORONTO Out & about

ProudFM Third Anniversary
April 16 at Fly Nightclub

Photos: Amanda Orr

Deb Pearse and Patrick Marano (Hosts of Breakfast in Bed with Patrick & Deb)

Miss Conception

Billy Newton-David

Chris Howson and Patrick Marano

DJ Ana Paula's CD Launch Party
April 2 at The Guvernment's Orange Room

Photos: Spencer Xiong

Mathieu Chantelois, DJ Ana Paula & friend

OTTAWA Out & about

Planning an event in Ottawa? Contact Ian at madgoat@gmail.com and he'll see about covering it in Out & About.

Native Grandfather William Commanda

Kevin Newman

Hon. Hedy Fry

The 5th Anniversary Jer's Vision/ Day of Pink Gala
April 14th at The Exchange

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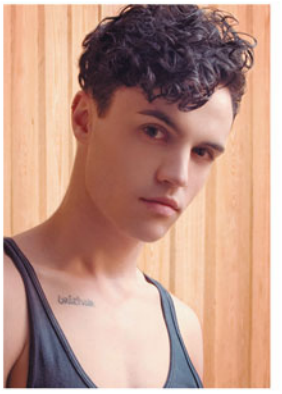
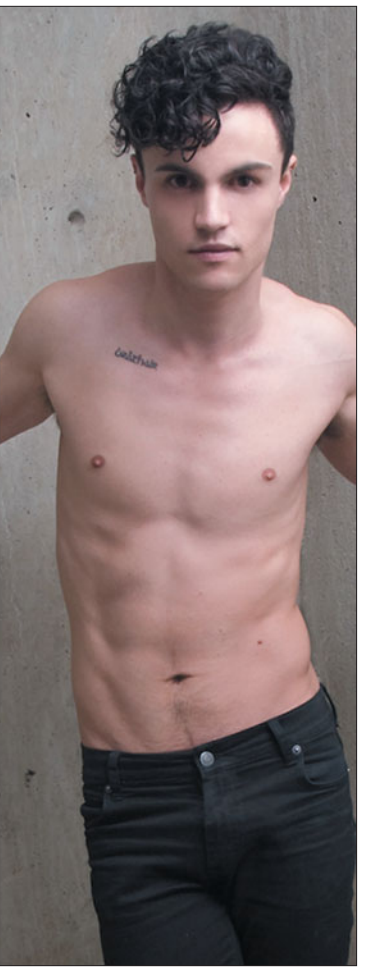
Don't You Wish...

Photos: Nicholas Jang www.double-take2.ca

Toban





Born and raised in Victoria BC, Toban is an island kid through and through, feeling most at home laying on a beach or wandering a forest path. He also enjoys the urban jungle of big city life. His love for the ocean, mixed with his desire for bright lights and wild nights, eventually brought him across the pond to Vancouver, where he currently resides.

Toban revels in being a chameleon, easily shifting from one scene to another. Part club kid who loves to dance the night away, part punk rocker who can mosh and thrash with the best of them, Toban is most of all a fashion fanatic—something that lends itself quite well to his creativity and love of change. Having worked both behind and in front of a camera, as a stylist and a model, Toban knows the ins and outs of the industry. He hopes to one day work in Paris or London, but in the meantime he's busy dressing models and mannequins, and friends and family out on the coast—always hunting for or creating clothes that tell a story and make a statement.

Toban was a runner-up in Gay Top Model 2010.

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May Horoscope

May is a time of sun, fun, rebirth and growth as Venus sextiles Mars. Love takes flight, goes into action and gracefully captures the object of our desires. Use it or lose it. Time is a wasting.

TAURUS (APRIL 21 - MAY 21)

Queer Bulls feel the love especially from relatives. Bridges can be built and good times are had for all involved. Find activities that get everyone together such as a family reunion. But keep an eye on costs. Creating and maintaining budgets are never much fun—but if you can focus on controlling your monetary outlay, it leads to a cushier summer where you can sit pretty.

GEMINI (MAY 22 - JUNE 21)

Do you feel that you are at a crossroad in your life? Are you seeking something more meaningful and deep? This may be your chance to energize your current path or get yourself on a new and exciting direction. May is the time to formulate your personal manifesto, and see how it is received by the movers and shakers. Don't be shy. Wallflowers will not get enough light.

CANCER (JUNE 22 - JULY 23)

Secret admirers make themselves known to you this May. And some can be very generous, not only with their affections but also with their gifts. Lucky gay Crabs can afford to be choosy and should take their time. There is one particular someone who is much more than he/she seems at first glance. Feel the merchandise before you try anything on.

LEO (JULY 24 - AUGUST 23)

Friends give you a leg up and a push into the limelight. They are especially supportive and ready to help, not only if you ask, but even if you don't ask. Proud Lions are usually full of self-confidence—but nothing beats the accolades you get right now. Don't waste time by procrastination. The door of opportunity is open. Stop standing on the threshold.

VIRGO (AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 23)

Senior staff love everything about you on the job, which is great timing for you this May. Take advantage of their blind devotion and make a few behind the scenes political maneuvres to help you solidify your position in the coming months. Queer Virgins can build on their executive acumen. Become the petty despot you always dreamed you could be.

LIBRA (SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 23)

If you are planning to travel, include some pals on your itinerary. Anything will be more fun with a crowd. And if you are interested in meeting new friends, May is the month to try a range of new organizations, social groups or clubs. Proud Libras have extra charisma to attract the best and the brightest. Add a bit of your own shine to dazzle the crowds.

SCORPIO (OCTOBER 24 - NOVEMBER 22)

You have some powerful and wealthy backers who are ready to help you professionally this May. Proud Scorps with a greedy need for power and prestige can acquire it. But use your gains for good and not for purely personal enrichment. Before you know it, your climb to the top will reach lofty and precarious heights. Who will love you as you cling to the small branches?

SAGITTARIUS (NOVEMBER 23 - DECEMBER 22)

Plan a romantic getaway with your partner this May. Not only will you be able to choose the perfect spot to express your eternal love, it will be a good respite from all the stress of daily life. If you are seeking your soulmate, use the month to expand your choice of opportunities. Who knows who is waiting for you at the other end of the world?

CAPRICORN (DECEMBER 23 - JANUARY 20)

Strive to get along with co-workers this May. It will strengthen your base of support for any furtive monetary gains. You may receive a raise or some type of promotion as the month progresses. Pink Caps are hard workers but hard work alone does not get you where you need to be. Sometimes success at work is based on a personality test. Become a master of ceremonies.

AQUARIUS (JANUARY 21 - FEBRUARY 19)

Aqueerians wrest more fun out of all types of relationships throughout May. Whether for business or pleasure, find ways to spice up and maximize the value of your partnerships. Yes, it sounds a little mercenary; but you will be surprised at how responsive others will be to your overtures, and how you can eventually profit by them. Expect nothing and be surprised.

PISCES (FEBRUARY 20 - MARCH 20)

If you have been feeling stressed, you can find a calming refuge at home. Make your personal space your personal oasis by adding a variety of mellow activities. Candlelight baths, new age music, good food and wine will all help to bring you back down to earth. By the time the summer gets fully under way, you will be ready for anything, everything and anyone.

ARIES . (MARCH 21 - APRIL 20)

Proud Rams are in the thick of things now, when your presence is required at every grand festivity. There will be plenty of parties to choose. But the best way to get into the fun groove is to take matters into your own hands and plan a few soirees yourself. Check the guest list twice. See who is naughty and who is nice. Then load up on the naughties.

Charlene Lichtenstein's ground breaking astrology book "HerScopes: A Guide to Astrology for Lesbians" tinyurl.com/herscopes is celebrating its 10th anniversary! The secrets that are revealed about each sign continue to amaze. Makes a great gift.

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